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Contents

EDITORIAL

TO WHAT EXTENT need learners of a foreign language study the literature written in that language? Often the answer given is 'Not at all'. But what is missed, and how is the language-learning affected, if the literature is ignored?

Much of the world's business is conducted in English, an international means of everyday communication. Much of science and technology is accessible in English but not in the student's own tongue. Thus the exclusion of literature from courses in English is easy to justify on vocational grounds: 'We need only a means of reading and discussing science', 'We need only a medium in which to conduct trade', and so on. In parts of the world where languages are many and various, English is also the means of general education for all.

The substance of the English language, however, has been shaped by literature. It is in literature that the resources of the language are most fully and most skilfully used. It seems to follow that literature should enter into the language-study of those who are to use the language with the greatest possible skill and effect.

The inclusion of literature in a language-course is also, of course, justifiable on other grounds. They are the grounds on which the study of literature is to be justified at all, in any language; and study of a foreign literature, at least where the cultural and historical tradition is on the whole the same as the learner's, may be a broadening-out of study of the literature of the mother tongue.

Yet 'study' seems hardly the word, summoning-up as it does an image of the mature student bent over his books. Lyrics are to be heard and not merely seen, plays are to be seen and heard. Literature is rooted, so far as the foreign-language learner is concerned, in the oral basis of language learning: rooted in lively and meaningful oral drills, in spoken and acted dialogues, in simple dramatisation of stories; indeed, in those very procedures which make for successful and interested learning of the language.

The printed literature cannot come to life if this basis has been lacking: it will remain largely impenetrable on the page if the reader is deaf, in the ear of imagination and memory, to its sound. Reading one's own literature one is never incapacitated by such deafness.

Note for Contributors

Contributors are particularly asked to submit in the first place outlines or suggestions only and NOT complete articles.

Manuscripts should be typed in double spacing on foolscap-sized paper, leaving wide margins at the top and bottom of the page and on either side. Footnotes should not be placed at the end of the typescript but as close as possible to the sentence they refer to. Manuscripts not accepted for publication will be returned by air-mail only if international reply coupons of sufficient value are enclosed.

Research Priorities[1]

BRUCE PATTISON

EVER SINCE language learning became necessary on a large scale cries of frustration have been audible. Apparently the results have not been satisfactory. In self-defence those responsible for teaching have protested that they are struggling with a mystery, that little is known about language teaching and that until research is carried out no improvement is possible.

This is rather a surprising admission, for until quite recently education was almost entirely linguistic. It is true it catered only for minorities and that the type of command of languages it sought was quite different from that now desired. It is much easier to see whether the utilitarian objectives of today are being reached than it was to judge what progress had been made towards the rather vague goals of the past. When learners obviously cannot do what they want to do with a language on which they have spent an appreciable time some explanation is sure to be demanded. It is only human that all the parties concerned are reluctant to accept blame. By claiming that what they are engaged in has been insufficiently investigated, teachers evade questioning about their general professional competence and the extent to which they have applied such relevant information as *is* available. For bureaucrats research in progress is as good as a commission of inquiry to justify the inertia they find most congenial. They are willing to dispense pittances of patronage to experts who may produce justifications for what they may find most convenient, and are not too fastidious as to what their potential allies are really experts in.

The natural people to turn to are students of language. Only by the most unlikely accident will anything be taught unless the nature of what has to be learned is appreciated. Language is too integral to the whole of human life either to be fully encompassed or to lose its attraction. Language teaching is only one of many activities that could benefit from increased understanding of it. But the accumulation of knowledge will not by itself affect any of them. Enough enlightenment about language has been available for half a century at least to make language teaching very different from what it is. The problem is to get teachers to apply it. They often do not even put into practice what they would subscribe to if challenged: still less are they aware of the assump-

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tions implied by their actual procedures. What matters is not what is stored in libraries but what teachers understand and can translate into action. Similarly with research into language teaching. It will be futile or even dangerous if it is based on questionable or inadequate conceptions of language. On the other hand, the study of language is only potentially applicable to any activity concerned with language. Continuing investigation is very important, but is unlikely to change some of the fundamental notions already fairly well established, and it is not immediately necessary for progress in the study of language learning.

Many disciplines have contributed to fuller understanding of language during the past century, but it is one traditional and rather restricted discipline that has retained its priviledged position as the chief authority on language teaching. This is largely because linguistics (as it is now called to draw attention to its improved techniques and its breaking out of its nineteenth-century historical preoccupation) is concerned only with language, whereas other disciplines look at language from their own points of view. Only a few linguists, such as Sapir, have been sufficiently knowledgeable about other disciplines to inject them into their traditional activities, and it is only recently that the desirability of doing so has been recognised, while at the same time attempting to maintain the suzerainty of linguistics, by the coinage of terms like psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics. The price of concentrating on language is that it has to be detached from its contexts, whatever lip-service may be paid to the importance of its contextual functioning, and the main objective is to set out the internal systems of particular languages. Other disciplines are more interested in the operation of language as part of the activity or organisation they are mainly concerned with. Linguistics deals largely with the physiology of languages, while other disciplines, especially the social sciences, deal with their ecology.

Both are obviously necessary to supply information for language teaching. It is the systems of a language that are most worth learning, for the aim is to become able to invent utterances to serve one's purposes as they arise, and not to memorise stereotyped formulae. The emphasis on the systematic nature of language since de Saussure has been a helpful formulation of what was always implicit in both linguistics and teaching, but rather inconsistently applied. Unfortunately for those seeking information about a language, though perhaps rightly for the progress of the science, for a long time linguists were preoccupied with working out methods of describing languages from the outside, and those who could not wait to apply the results had only sketchy outlines of well-known languages such as English. At first their notes hardly went beyond the phonemes. Then

grammar was reached, but lexical sets and hierarchies have received little attention, and semantics is just beginning to be tackled. For some reason it was thought to be a sort of reactionary revisionism to turn to the wealth of detail in the more traditional grammars such as those of Jespersen and Kruisinga. Fortunately investigation by empirical methods has continued, and it is very important that it should do so. A teacher can never know enough about the language he is teaching. Sound theories are perhaps an advantage in the necessary study and formulation, but to what extent this is true is not at all certain. Any generalisations must be embodied in speech for the appropriate learning to be possible: it is really from observation and practice of the language in operation that a language is acquired. Provided the samples are not misleading or mutually confusing, the range and consistency of the systems underlying them perhaps hardly matter. Teachers who are puzzled by any feature of a language should be encouraged to investigate it in their own way, and it is from the accumulation of such empirically discovered information, rather than from grandiose attempts to find a clue to the whole maze, that the programming of a language for teaching can be improved.

Descriptions of systems and usage will always be of paramount importance because it is unlikely that anything as complex as language will ever be fully understood; but they give only the raw material for teaching. The attainment of practical skill in operating what is set out in the descriptions is a different problem. The shift of interest during the past decade from analysis of recorded or possible speech to the competence of a speaker would seem to bring linguistics closer to the standpoint of the language teacher. To know how sentences are generated by native speakers should be a great help to those engaged in getting learners of a language to improvise acceptable utterances. Unfortunately all that is happening is that the traditional rules for constructing sentences are being set out in more detail and in better order. It is all being done on paper as an exercise in classification and arrangement. There is not even a pretence that people actually do generate sentences according to the rules. Yet how people invent new utterances would be well worth investigating. It is obviously the essential skill to be acquired, since reproduction of utterances previously heard would very inadequately meet even a small part of the requirements of ordinary usage.

The natural starting-point of such an inquiry would be children's acquisition of their first language. This has always attracted attention, but recently more sophisticated methods of study have supplemented the older one of recording children's early efforts at speech as fully as possible. The children chosen still tend to be

rather exceptional and to belong to the four European speech-communities represented in the vast literature on the subject up to date. A wider social, cultural, and linguistic range will be necessary before generalisations can be very confident, and obtaining it has become rather urgent since there began to be talk once more of language universals. Such talk certainly runs far ahead of any evidence available. A general tendency for this to happen throws doubt on some recent writing. There is reason to suppose a child practises combinations of lexical items as he passes from one-word to two- or three-word sentences, but to read a grammatical relationship into the usual word-order or to call one combination a transformation of another, when in neither case are there the adult grammatical signs, is to beg the very questions that should be answered. The only scientific procedure is to approach a child's language as a language in its own right, without preconceived notions derived from adult language. Studies need to go to more advanced ages than they have done up to now. There is, of course, great difficulty in covering a child's language fully once he begins to move about and talk with other children as well as with adults outside the family. Attempts to do so have little value. It would be possible, however, to devise experiments to see how new rules are worked out from what a child hears and applied in his own speech. Laboratory conditions are always imperfect representations of what happens in real life, but Russian psychologists have added a good deal to knowledge of young children's language by ingeniously-arranged experiments. It is unlikely that all children use the same strategies. The collection of those that were used would throw much light on the processes that really go on in the invention of original utterances.

There is no reason to suppose that the same strategies are used in learning a second or later language. Greater maturity, awareness of the nature of language and the experience of learning at least one other language must all make a difference. Nevertheless some transfer must occur, and the first-language learning of children, both monolinguals and the minority of bilinguals, is relevant. Similar studies of second-language learning would be more immediately helpful. If the major characteristic of a language is its almost infinite adaptability, and developing a capacity to invent utterances as they are needed is the chief task of language teaching, then the strategies of invention should be the vital area for language-teaching research. Unfortunately it is very difficult terrain. The learner's input—what he hears—can be recorded—more easily with a language learned in the classroom than with one the child learns in its ordinary environment. So can the learner's output—the utterance he produces. But what goes on

inside him cannot be observed. Yet deductions can be made from the relationship between input and output. This is commonly done in explaining the mistakes of children with their first language. When a child inflects an English verb stem instead of changing the vowel—when he says 'runned' instead of 'ran'—we conclude that he has mastered the rule for the formation of the past tense but not fully learned the exceptions to it. Obviously individuals differ in their ways and speeds of carrying out such processes, and their circumstances vary too. Research as a separate activity is inappropriate, and what is needed is the accumulation of a large amount of information from experiments and observation by teachers. They would have to be briefed to record in detail the analogies they expected their pupils to make and the degree of success they had. Any loss in research efficiency would be amply compensated by the effect on their teaching and by the engagement of teachers in classroom research. Education is like medicine in that it can profit from reports of experience as well as laboratory research. Teachers would benefit from greater willingness to test their procedures by experiment and controlled observation. The particular kind of observation just suggested would entail making sure their pupils were always challenged to take chances in inventing original speech by analogies and inferences from what has actually been heard and learned. Drawing teachers into the research process would mean that research would not merely store up information, most of which would probably never be used, but would directly influence teaching. An important element in the education of teachers should, of course, be convincing them that teaching need not be governed by opinion and trial and error but can be guided by experiment and objective assessment.

The great diversity of learners of a world language such as English makes research on the teaching of it in general difficult to relate to the specific problems of various teachers and learners. The study of these specific problems will probably have more immediate effect. It would be interesting to know why various groups are learning English. It seems very likely that a good deal of effort is being wasted in giving school-children a command of English too limited and insecure to be any use to them. One of my students a few years ago investigated the uses of the languages current in a territory under British rule and in which approximately half the population were immigrants. He found that the immigrants always used the indigenous language in talking to the indigenous population, and that the British civil servants were obliged to learn the indigenous language and used it in dealing with the people whose first language it was. A primary-school leaver of the indigenous group had no reason to talk or under-

stand any language but his own. Moreover, the books and newspapers in English available in the bookshops were far too difficult for anybody who had just completed the readers studied in the top class in the primary school. The English learned in the primary schools was beneficial only to the small minority going on to secondary education. The others quickly lost it. Once such a situation is recognised something can be done about it. To discover it the language usage of the area as a whole has to be studied. There is great scope for such studies. The East African Language Survey now in progress is an example that could well be followed elsewhere.

When the prospective uses of English of any group of learners can be foreseen teaching can be directed towards them. The characteristics of different registers have been insufficiently described. Information about them must be used with caution, however. Adults who are already proficient in a branch of knowledge and merely want to talk or read about it in a new language may as well concentrate on the structures most frequent in speech and writing about it and on the new terminology for what they already know. It is rather different with those who have to learn a new discipline and not merely a new language. If they are to join classes of native speakers it is the language of those classes, not the language of the discipline in general, they have to cope with. For immigrants in this country analysis of the language of actual lessons would be helpful in planning their preparation to be integrated into ordinary school classes, but it would certainly not be by any means the only source of information for that purpose. The same is even truer of those overseas for whom English is a medium of general education. It is not the English of science that is their problem; it is science itself. To drill them in a selection of the language would result in mere verbalism. They need a language of their own in which they can talk about what they see and handle, for it is through experience of concrete materials and processes that the abstractions of science are grasped. Customary forms of expression should not be confused with understanding. The former will be acquired incidentally if the latter is attained, and it is understanding that really matters.

Research with any scientific rigour into teaching itself is almost impossible because of the large number of variables involved. The term 'method' associated with teaching is satisfactory to denote a plan for reaching a specific and limited objective. A method of teaching the present perfect would describe how examples of the form would be presented, how they would be practised, how the form would be differentiated from others that might be chosen instead of it, what practice in selection would be organised, and finally—the essential stage in the teaching of any item—what

opportunities would be given to select it without prompting when only it is suitable for the context. Generalised the term 'method' is too vague to be useful, and such titles as 'the audio-visual method' are meaningless. The coinage of the term 'methodics', which sounds like a new science, betrays utter ignorance of education.

Assessment of results is, of course, highly desirable at the end of any teaching, but it can only be in terms of its particular aims and content and has little general validity, though it may be suggestive for the future or for other teachers. If the objectives have been unsatisfactory, it has not even that value. There is no point in evaluating a course that has required of the learner only substitution of items in frames or manipulation of structures, because that is not language learning. The only sensible way of assessing a course or a lesson is to examine what it tries to get a learner to do and judge whether that is something he will have to do in using the language. Whether the means of getting him to do it would work with the particular learners for whom they were intended, it is impossible to say unless one knows them, but an experienced teacher can usually tell what would have a reasonable chance of success in most comparable circumstances. Such assessment is subjective, of course, but it is advisable before embarking on objective assessment of attempts to reach goals not worth aiming at.

Objective assessment becomes necessary only when the products of different teaching have to be compared, and it always involves judging them by a common standard. The difficulty is to define the standard. It is least difficult when the purpose is to select for future study or work—for university entrance, for example. The real question is whether candidates can do what they want to do. There is no point in inquiring why they can or cannot. If a person wants to take a course in chemistry, what has to be discovered is whether he can follow the course, and the best test is a specimen of the learning he will have to undertake. What part language plays in his success or failure is of no interest. This is true even if he already has the qualifications for a place in an English-speaking country. He may think language is his only problem, and others may attribute his lack of success to that, because he has managed satisfactorily where English was not so important. But in fact it may be habits of study, as much as language, that are not right for the new environment. It is usually difficult to say what linguistic inadequacy will alone prove too much for a student, and it is fruitless to speculate about this. A prognostic test must look forward and represent the future activities aimed at. Unless the aim is to study a language, that language does not come into it specifically at all.

The truth is that language is inseparable from the activities it furthers. Any attempt to isolate it will distort it. Certainly breaking it down into features will do so, because the features are almost sure to be incomplete. Testing phonemes, structures, and lexis provides employment for linguists but no assessment of total competence, such is the complexity and the redundancy in any language. Effectiveness is entirely subjective: that must be accepted in judging competence at producing speech or writing. The most reliable way of assessing it is quite deliberately *not* to itemise its characteristics but to form a total impression. The impressions of a number of judges with experience of the standard required proves remarkably reliable, and this is as objective as one can get about what is really at issue. It is different with comprehension. Here one can put questions each with only one right answer, but to test what matters they must be answers found by the process that goes on in effective listening or reading. In short, ability to do anything can be tested only by getting people to try doing it. A great deal of ingenuity has been wasted on devising tests that are objective only in the sense that they can be mechanically marked. The argument is that language skills can be isolated. That is contrary to everything that is known about language. It is sheer delusion to suppose that even the itemising tests are free from the influence of the content they employ. Here again the reality must be faced, that all speech has content. In testing linguistic competence ability to deal with certain topics in certain contexts is inevitably tested. The sensible course is to accept the fact. Research should be directed to determine what a person who has reached a specific stage in his education should be able to speak and write, to listen and read about, and in what styles. This will have a good influence on teaching, whereas the easily marked tests have had a disastrous effect wherever they have been tried. A good deal also remains to be done about the techniques of assessment, but research must not be so obsessed with technique as to lose sight of what it is trying to assess.

The information most directly applicable to classroom procedure comes from the study of learning and of education in general. Even this has to be adapted to language teaching specifically, and this is true of all the research I have so far suggested. The trouble is that it never gets applied. Continuing research by no means ensures better teaching. But that is another story. I have only tried to suggest what kinds of research would be most profitable.

Making Wall Pictures from Cut-outs: a Simple Visual Aid for English in Primary Schools

J. Y. K. KERR
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TEACHERS OF ENGLISH in primary schools, particularly in Africa and Asia, often complain that they are unable to use visual aids to enhance their English language work, either because the school has no funds with which to buy such aids or because they themselves have no gift for drawing. The type of aid described in this article overcomes both these objections, since the materials cost almost nothing and little, if any, skill in drawing is required for the teacher. The technique has been employed successfully in countries as different as Nigeria and Spain.

The aim is to construct a wall picture which will afford language practice suitable to the level of the class. The picture is made in the following way. Common objects, or people performing suitable actions, are cut out of old illustrated magazines. The colour supplements of British Sunday papers, 'The Illustrated London News', 'Life', 'Paris-Match', and the host of illustrated magazines for women provide the largest amount of suitable material, often from the pages of advertisements. Local illustrated magazines, particularly if they contain photographs in colour, are also very suitable. The actual choice of subject matter may have to be controlled by the teacher, but the cutting out (usually in silhouette) can be done by the children themselves in or out of school under the teacher's direction. The finished cut-outs are then pasted on a large rectangle of brown wrapping-paper in accordance with a chosen theme and the finished picture is then fixed on the classroom wall. (If brown paper should be unobtainable, cardboard or even newspaper will serve.)

The simplest theme consists of a number of common but unrelated objects (say, a bottle of beer, a packet of cigarettes, a radio, a watch, a tin of soup, a pair of shoes, a spoon, or whatever the magazine illustrations yield) which provide material for drilling such patterns as the following:

What is this? It's a bottle of beer. What colour is it? It's green. What is it made of? It's made of glass. What is it used for? etc. *How much does it cost?* etc.

Of course, not all these patterns should be introduced at the same

time. A different pattern can be practised in each lesson after previous patterns have been revised. Nor does this exhaust the list of possibilities. Singular/plural contrasts, questions to be answered by 'yes' or 'no', prepositions indicating spatial relationships between the objects are all easy to practise with this material. But since such pictures are so easy and quick to make, there is no need to work one picture to death. If interest in it begins to flag after a week or two the picture can be taken down and another constructed in its place.

Nevertheless it is usually advisable to consolidate the oral practice with simple written work first. A list of the questions already practised can therefore be written on the blackboard and the children can be told to answer them with reference to one or more of the objects chosen from the picture. If answers are written on little slips of paper, the best example describing each object (taking into consideration neat handwriting, correct spelling, and punctuation) can be pinned on the picture beside the object concerned. A typical answer might be:

This is a bottle of beer. It is green and it is made of glass. It is used for drinking. It costs 3s. 6d. It is quite expensive but you can buy it everywhere.

A second theme which is suitable for near beginners shows people performing common actions (a boy riding a bicycle, a man having a bath, an athlete jumping, a girl holding an umbrella, etc.). This yields plenty of practice in the use of the present continuous tense, but also in the use of pronouns and the description of clothing.

As the class progresses, more complex themes can be selected, such as *Means of transport*, affording useful practice in patterns expressing comparison: e.g. *An aeroplane is faster than a car. A train journey is more expensive than a bus journey;* or *People from other countries*, where the names of countries and nationalities are brought to life; or *People at work* (a policeman directing traffic, a farmer cutting his corn, a mechanic repairing a car, etc.), where the simple and continuous forms of the present tense can be contrasted.

Other themes can be developed in which people and objects are related to each other within the picture space. Here, admittedly, a few bold lines with a felt pen or a wash of poster paint are needed to set the scene. This might be:

A market or shopping scene, with three or four stalls, each selling a different kind of merchandise: food, clothing, household utensils; clocks, watches and jewellery. Prices of some articles can be indicated.

A house in England (with outer walls removed, like some dolls'

houses) with a sitting-room, kitchen, bedroom, and bathroom suitably furnished, with a car in the garage and flowers in the garden.

A traffic scene, with cars and lorries travelling along a road and such features as signposts, traffic lights, a car park, a bridge, a hill, a wrecked car, etc.

A forest scene, where a variety of birds and animals are placed against a painted green background suggesting foliage, or grouped around a river or water-hole.

Such themes readily lend themselves to more narrative treatment or at any rate to imaginative treatment. For example, one such scene used with African children produced patterns such as:

If the lion sees the deer, what will it do? If the duck sees the crocodile, what will it do?

An example of controlled composition deriving from the same picture was as follows:

I am a lion and I look like a big cat. My colour is light brown and I am very big and strong. I live in the grassland and eat other animals. After I have eaten, I like to sleep in the sun.

In such composite pictures it is virtually impossible to keep the relative sizes of objects to the same scale, but children do not seem particularly upset if, for example, a cat is as big as an armchair, or a frog and a crocodile are nearly the same size.

One final theme involves physical activity from the whole class: *The restaurant*. Appetising dishes of food and bottles or glasses of various kinds of drink are cut out and pasted on circular discs of card, symbolising plates. A menu is written on the blackboard. Some children act as waiters, others are customers. Orders are given and brought, plates are 'emptied' (by turning them over so that the blank underside is showing), bills can be made out and paid for with simulated coins. When the activity has ended, the children can describe their experience either orally or in writing —preferably both.

It is necessary to mention some of the pitfalls which may occur with this technique. In some countries magazines are hard to come by and the teacher may have to amass a suitable stock of them over several months. They can often be obtained by appealing to hotels, clubs, and public libraries as well as to individuals. The bulk of the material available will no doubt represent the European and American way of life—very different from that of a provincial town in parts of Africa and Asia. The teacher must try to choose material which is inherently interesting to the children but which is still not too remote from their experience, though such experience may have been gained at second hand through the

cinema or television. For instance, the eating habit of westerners are often quite unfamiliar, or in some respects even abhorrent, in other parts of the world. The dishes of food chosen for the last activity mentioned should therefore relate to the children's own diet. Above all, the teacher must think out carefully and in advance the patterns to be practised with each picture. It is here that resourcefulness and imaginative handling is most needed if interest is not to be squandered.

The advantages of the technique may be summed-up as follows. Apart from low cost and the absence of any need for skill in drawing, the degree of interest shown by the children in a picture which they have helped to make is very high. Further, the teacher has fairly close control over the choice of his material—closer than in commercially produced wall pictures—and his range of subject matter is greater than if he were confined to common realia—cups, balls, pencils, etc., which in any case are often a nuisance for the busy teacher to collect and bring to class. Finally, the end product is appealing and decorative, qualities of which many underendowed schools around the world still stand in need.

The Problem of Tags

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IN SPITE of the extensive research that goes on in many quarters to rationalise the teaching of English as a foreign language, one is still often left with the impression that only the surface has been touched in dealing with the innumerable problems present. Certain constructions that appear to be quite elementary to present, explain, and get the learner to understand, fail to get across to the student in that they do not become a part of his productive language. The problem of question or confirmation tags is a case in point.

Our attention was drawn to this case when it was noticed that fairly advanced students with conversational ease in English, after more than 330 hours of intensive instruction by modern methods, hardly ever used confirmation tags spontaneously, although they could adequately manipulate the construction if specifically requested to do so. (The students in question were university undergraduates, mainly of Dutch and French origin, but there were also other nationalities present, including Vietnam-

ese, Congolese, Latin Americans, and Italians.) Moreover, this reticence to use confirmation tags proved to be the case in spite of intensive and recurrent drilling and incentive-stimuli to encourage the student to use them. As far as their passive language went, learners had no difficulty in understanding the construction and in reacting spontaneously and correctly to it as a stimulus. Now normally the most difficult and complex construction should reappear in feedback, given the right environment, yet classroom experience with students of various linguistic ability (from beginners to very advanced speakers) and from a wide variety of backgrounds has shown that this does not seem to be so with confirmation tags[1]. In this situation the teacher should try to find out why there is no feedback.

One reason that springs to mind is that the student feels he does not need the construction, since he can adequately convey the meaning contained in the tag by other and less complex means. When we realise that the main function of the tag is generally considered as asking for confirmation of what has been said, then it is evident that there are other and less subtle means of going about the same thing. One more evident means at the student's disposal is the direct question, either in the normal form or in the negative interrogative form. Both 'Has he tried?' and 'Hasn't he tried?' allow for the answer 'Yes' or 'No', which is the result the tag would have brought out. Admittedly these direct questions do not convey the speaker's attitude as well as the tag does, but this can likewise be supplied by other means, for example by adding further information clearly indicating one's own attitude: 'Hasn't he tried? I thought he had.' or 'I suppose he's tried.' (This seems to be the formula most learners tend to adopt.) The more hesitant student will quite often go so far as to forgo the nicety of conveying his own attitude and content himself with the more direct statement of the type 'He's tried', leaving it to the listener to confirm or deny as the case may be.

Another important explanation for their non-usage may be the fact that the level or register at which tags would be used is one that presupposes both extreme fluency and an advanced knowledge of the language, to which should be added a high degree of informality in the situation in which they are used. There is an element of naturalness necessary to the use of tags which it is difficult to create or command, although even when this is achieved in the classroom they are rarely if ever forthcoming.

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[1] 'The fact that a student has understood a grammatical function does not at all imply that he will be able to use it or even that he will simply think of using it.' *Le laboratoire de langues dans l'enseignement supérieur*, p. 90. Strasbourg, 1967.

Given that many languages have a construction similar to the confirmation tag one might assume that by analogy the student would feel the need of this construction and would transfer this need into his English. Once acquainted with the English equivalent he might be expected quite naturally to avail himself of it. But in most other languages it is a stereotyped phrase that carries out a similar function to that of the tags *n'est-ce pas* (French), *niet-waar* (Dutch), *nicht wahr* (German), *non è vero* (Italian), *¿ no es verdad ?* (Spanish), etc. The English equivalent is part of a complex system with subtle information patterns which might account in part for the student's not using it. Moreover, a look at these foreign-language equivalents seems to indicate that the stereotyped phrase has a double function; the invitation to confirm or deny might take a secondary place, with the primary function being more akin to that of the interjection. To look at just one example: 'Nice weather, isn't it?' might be rendered in Dutch by 'Mooi weer, *niet waar*?', which could be reduced to 'Mooi weer, *niet*?' or even 'Mooi weer, *he*!' (In French we would have 'Il fait beau, *n'est-ce pas*? or 'Il fait beau, *non*?' or 'Il fait beau, *hein*!'.) Similarly, a certain category of English speaker in similar circumstances might say 'Nice day, *what*!' or 'Nice day, *eh*!' If we assume that the learner assimilates the confirmation tag to some sort of interjection, his reluctance to use it might be more easily explained. After all, how often do we expect students to make interjections in English, and if we do, how often does he spontaneously get the opportunity to use them in the classroom?

These three arguments above might explain the student's inherent reluctance to use the confirmation tag, but if we are to assume that the learner is to be given the opportunity to use all of the English language, then an effective way of bringing this about should be devised. Moreover, their use is considered essential by certain European examining bodies, so that unless these bodies could be persuaded, in the light of the above arguments, to modify their criteria (something which is probably desirable, at least at the secondary school level), the confirmation tags should be taught in a manner that is likely to be productive.

Before deciding on how to teach tags, it would be useful to consider the system that lies behind them. They are indeed fairly complex and should be examined more closely than is normally done in the manuals.

The basic idea is that the tag will change a statement into a sort of question which requires confirmation.

(i) If the statement is affirmative the tag is normally negative: 'He's Dutch, *isn't he*?'

(ii) If the statement is negative the tag is normally positive: 'He isn't French, *is he*?'

(iii) The tag must normally agree in number, gender, and tense with the verb in the main clause: 'You came by train, *didn't you*?'

(iv) The tag conveys the attitude of the speaker according to the intonation used, namely:

There is a rise on the tag if the speaker asks for confirmation but allows for denial: 'I can come again, ⟋ *can't I*?'

There is a fall on the tag if the speaker asks for confirmation and does not expect denial: 'I can come again, ⟍ *can't I*?'

(v) The tag must be the same as the auxiliary verb in most cases: 'I mustn't do that, *must I*?' 'We can cross here, *can't we*?'

(vi) In all other cases the tag is replaced by 'do': 'It rained all day, *didn't it*?'

An entirely different meaning is conveyed if the tag is in the same form as in the main clause, i.e. if the pattern is positive-positive: 'He's French, *is he*?' or negative-negative 'She's not coming, ⟋ *isn't she*? (with a rising intonation on the tag). In this case the tag conveys an attitude of irony, astonishment, and so on. This usage does not necessarily correspond to the foreign-language stereotyped phrases mentioned and is not possible with all forms of all verbs, for example *need* and *dare*.

Above we have just the basic rules, but there are several off-putting exceptions and complications which are often introduced far too early in even the most reputable courses. First of all, the verb *to be* presents the anomaly of *aren't I* in the so-called negative tag, and *am I* in the so-called positive one: 'I'm late, *aren't I*?' as opposed to 'I'm not late, *am I*?' (This proves to be a great stumbling-block for students in the initial stages.) Certain verbs have two possibilities, according to whether they are full verbs or modal auxiliaries. *Dare* as a full verb takes the tag with *do*, as in: 'He dares (to do) anything, *doesn't he*?', while as an auxiliary verb it follows the same rule as for other auxiliaries: 'We daren't go home this late, *dare we*?' Moreover, an added complication arises with this particular verb in that it is not easy to add a tag in the simple past tense: ×'He dared venture that far, *daredn't he/ didn't he*? and ×'We dared not go home that late, *dared we/did we*?'. *Need* is another verb that takes two types of tag according to whether it is a full verb: 'He needs a new car, *doesn't he*?', 'You don't need to go yet, *do you*?', or whether it is an auxiliary verb: 'You needn't go yet, *need you*?', 'He need only attend on Saturday, *needn't he*?'. *Have* also presents a double possibility: 'They have two children, *don't they*?'. 'They have two children, *haven't they*? (N.B. In the negative one can say: 'They haven't any children, *have they*?' but not ×'They haven't any children, *do they*?') *Used to* is a verb that takes the tag with *did*: 'He used to come on Sundays, *didn't he*?'. Not all the tags agree in number

with the preceding verb, e.g. 'Nobody has come for the parcel, *have they*?'. 'Nobody speaks French here, *do they*?' Imperatives can be rendered more polite by using the tag with *will*: 'Do this for me, *will you*?', 'You'll put them away, *won't you*?' (Again here the foreign-language stereotyped phrases mentioned do not correspond.) These examples are only a few of the more evident exceptions, though it is felt that many more would be revealed if a careful study of tags were to be undertaken.

Armed with a knowledge of the complexity of the system, the organisation of the teaching of confirmation tags can be undertaken, bearing production in mind as the final aim. The difficulties come on three levels: form, meaning, and intonation. (A fourth level might be that of the irregularities.) To achieve a positive use of tags the teaching should go on in easy stages, paying particular attention to the intonation patterns involved and leaving the anomalies right to the end.

First of all, it is considered advisable to present the tags with the rising intonation, even though these are not the most frequently used in everyday spoken English. The reason for this is that these are the most easily grasped by students speaking a western European language, as their intonation pattern is that of normal yes-no questions, corresponds to what the student expects because of the grammatical form involved, and is the same as the pattern for questions and the stereotyped phrase-equivalents in his own language. At this stage the student can concentrate on the form of the tag, since there are no subtleties of meaning or intonation involved. When the teacher is conscious of spontaneous feedback, and only then, is he ready to move on to the next step.

Stage two involves the teaching of the tag that conveys an attitude of irony or astonishment. Although this form is not as frequent as the other, the intonation pattern is basically the same and the meaning is easy to get across. This one is the least difficult to teach and also the easiest to get students to use productively (particularly if an atmosphere of humorous banter can be created between students). This is probably because the emotional overtone is very evident to the student—given the correct stimulus the more emotional reflex is easier to trigger off.

Finally, and at a very advanced stage in the course, students should encounter the confirmation tag with the falling intonation pattern. By this time all formal difficulties should have been eliminated and attention should be concentrated on the intonation. This form should then be rigorously and repeatedly drilled, with the teacher using it as much as possible in his own conversation and encouraging it overtly in his students. This is also where the irregularities should be dealt with.

The timing of the three stages is very important. Obviously the learner will have to encounter tags at a very early point because of their frequency in the language. But it would be wasteful to spend a lot of time drilling students in constructions that they can manipulate perfectly well but for which they feel no subsequent need. The time to expect confirmation tags from students is when they reach a very high and advanced degree of fluency (probably towards the end of the training of an English specialist). Surely it would be more rational to save the time spent on such points until the learner is at a level where he is really going to use what is at his disposal? Unfortunately most course-writers in English as a foreign language do not seem to be aware of this and present tags either *en bloc* or in a haphazard fashion far too early. (I have known of teachers who introduce tags in the very first English lesson taught.) This opinion is supported by arguments put forward in an article entitled '*Tag Questions—dangerous psycholinguistic territory for TESOL*'[1] where results of experiments involving native speakers of English pointed to a system of such complexity that the authors advocate that tags should not be taught in the early stages.

The case of question tags is only one of many which show that more attention should be given to studying the way students use the language that has been fed to them, so that future programmes might be framed bearing in mind this phenomenon of 'natural rejection'.

Exploiting the Tape-Recorder

MICHAEL MONTGOMERY

TEACHERS SOMETIMES WONDER what precise use a tape-recorder can be to them as an aid to language teaching. Here two instances of the use of a tape-recorder are described. In the first instance the tape-recorder is used to teach a senior form and acts mainly as a simple incentive. In the second instance it is used with a first-year class as an incentive, as a valuable diagnostic instrument, and as a text from which language can be learnt.

The task set the senior students was to produce a number of radio talks between professional interviewers and popular figures or types. For this purpose students formed themselves into

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[1] T. R. Smackey and R. Beyon, in IRAL, May 1969, VII/2, pp. 105–15.

groups of two or three and set to work writing scripts. One group interviewed a recently famous astronaut, another a teacher temporarily leaving his job to take an upgrading course, and a third a popular singer.

We made the first recording of the interviews. They were rather disappointing when played back. It was immediately obvious that the interviewer had left all the talking to the personality, who merely delivered long speeches. This taught students something about the style suitable for this type of radio programme. Individually they listened to the radio to try to see what made an interview a success. Students learned that the interviewer talks nearly as much as the personality, and asks personal questions, showing his keen interest even in the person's domestic affairs.

The scripts were rewritten and a lot of trouble was taken with them. Students were prepared to do this largely because of the tape-recorder. A day was fixed for recording and playing back the talks. They were also to be played to junior forms afterwards. There was glamour, a touch of realism, and an irresistible opportunity for self-projection.

Here, reproduced in full, is the transcript of one interview, exactly as recorded.

Interviewer: This is Mr Stephen Ajim, a Grade III teacher, who is now doing a two-year completion course for a Teacher's Grade II Certificate. Hello, Mr Ajim.
Mr Ajim: Yes, Mr Garba.
Interviewer: We're happy to have you in our studio today. We learned you've come back to college. In which college are you?
Mr Ajim: I'm at . . . Teachers' College, doing my two-year Grade II completion course.
Interviewer: From which part of the country have you come?[1]
Mr Ajim: I come from Korinya village in Tiv Division.
Interviewer: Can you tell us something about your village?
Mr Ajim: Yes, Korinya is a fairly large village and is one of the market centres in Tiv. It is fairly near to the eastern part of Nigeria. The road which connects the north and the east passes through this village.
Interviewer: I see, we presume you have worked there before as a teacher.
Mr Ajim: Yes.
Interviewer: And I'm really sure you enjoyed your work and your earnings.
Mr Ajim: Yes, exactly so.
Interviewer: But why have you decided to leave it?
Mr Ajim: Well, you know our country is advancing rapidly, and it does not seem worth while to remain as a Grade III teacher while I have the opportunity of becoming a Grade II teacher after two years' stay in the college.

[1]*Have you come* is probably an error for *do you come*. Errors and stylistic awkwardness in the examples quoted in this article have not been marked because it is very difficult to decide in many cases whether the English is acceptable or not. The reader is therefore requested to make this judgement for himself where necessary.

Interviewer: Ah, you're enjoying your salary as well as acquiring knowledge. What do you do with all this big money you accumulate there? In a college one seems to have nothing practically to do with money.

Mr Ajim: No, the government gives no salaries to students on completion courses, but arrangements are being made for pocket-money of £5 per month.

Interviewer: I think you have a family?

Mr Ajim: Yes.

Interviewer: And how will they live without your financial support?

Mr Ajim: You see, after I have paid my fee of £15 per annum, I have practically nothing to do with money. The £5 go to my family.

Interviewer: Apart from losing your salaries, do you encounter any other difficulties in the college?

Mr Ajim: Yes, as a student I undergo many difficulties. When I was at home I was a very big man; I slept and rose when I pleased; many servants were at my service. But here in the college I have to sleep and rise according to regulations. I wash my plates and clothes myself, and such like. The diet is also unsatisfactory. But then I can't help it.

Interviewer: I suppose, as a teacher, your salary was big and you have now decided to lose it for two years. Are you therefore pleased about it?

Mr Ajim: Yes, my salary was reasonably big. I used to earn about £250 per annum. Apart from this, I also earned some allowances. But, as I have mentioned earlier, it is the thirst for knowledge that has brought me back to the college. It's really a long-term gain.

Interviewer: Oh, well, then, what do you think about those Grade III teachers who are not fortunate enough to get admission into college again?

Mr Ajim: The government has planned an in-service course for them. That is the T.I.S.E.P. By this means many of them may get their Grade II in about three years' time. Indeed the American Peace Corps are doing their utmost best to make the course a success.

Interviewer: You have actually enjoyed life for a long time, and I think the difficulties you are now encountering are affecting your studies.

Mr Ajim: It really happened so for the first few months. However, I have strived hard to adapt myself to the college life, and I'm doing very well in my studies now.

Interviewer: Thank you very much Mr Ajim, for the information you have given us. We wish you success.

Mr Ajim: Yes, thank you, Mr Garba.

Interviewer: Oh, excuse, me please.

Mr Ajim: Yes, what is it, please?

Interviewer: Shall you come back to our studio again during your next holidays? We enjoy conversing with you.

Mr Ajim: Not very sure, but I hope to call, if I come to Kaduna.

Interviewer: Oh, thank you.

Mr Ajim: Bye, bye.

The second use of the tape-recorder described here has perhaps greater potential for both student and teacher. It is the recording of students interviewing their guide during an educational visit, and the use later made of this recording.

As before, the motivation arising from the incentive of the tape-recorder is its main value. Students are therefore anxious to make a thorough preparation. If a variety of patterns for asking questions are to be practised beforehand, this will be done with a will, as it is practice for a definite purpose on a specific occasion. The necessity of asking questions that are intelligible will be quite apparent to the students.

The visit described here was to a railway station, and the students' guide was the station-master himself. It was therefore necessary to write to him asking if he would act as guide. This was a useful exercise for the students. Style had to be considered, and also exactly what information he had to be given, how many students, at what time, on what day, for how long, where to meet, etc. In addition to this, in order to have questions to ask, students had to find out all they could about railways in advance. This led to the use of encyclopedias and other library books. After all this preparation students set off to the station, each with a short list of questions, paper, a piece of cardboard to press on, and a ball-point pen.

The next use of the tape-recorder was for the acquisition of lexis, both during and after the actual visit to the station.

It is inevitable that students will to some extent be affected by the language they hear their guide speaking. If they ask a question using inappropriate language, and he answers supplying the correct expression, then firstly students are exposed to a correct utterance at a time that they have attempted (and therefore need) this expression, and secondly, on playing the tape back in class, the correct version can be heard again and its verbal context used to teach it. The following extracts from the dialogue on the tape show the opportunities for vocabulary acquisition.

1. Student A: How can the station-master will know that the train is fall on the way?
   Station-master: You mean when we have a derailment?
   Student A: Yes.
   Student B
   (aside):   A derailment.

2. Student: May I know the name of the person that join the coaches?
   Station-master: Well, that's the shunter.
   Teacher (spelling
     out the word
     as the student
     writes):   S.H.U.N.T.E.R.

3. Student: Here on the station it is written 'shunt limit', what does that mean?
   Station-master: That means that while you are shunting at the station you must not pass beyond that point.

4. Student: I read a notice inside the train last time that if you stop train on the middle of the station[1], they fine you. I don't know what it means. I want to find out more about it.

Station-master: You mean the chain?

Student: Yes, Sir.

Station-master: Yes, when we have an accident, like somebody falling off the train, or goods falling from the train, they can apply that one to stop the train.

Teacher: You pull the chain.

Station-master: But if you misuse it, then you will be fined £5.

Student: When do we misuse it?

Station-master: When you just stop it without reason, then you'll be fined £5.

In the following extract there is a double opportunity for teaching the meaning of 'automatic'.

5. Student A: The chain in the train, does it force the engine to stop, or it rings the bell for the driver to stop the engine?

Station-master: It's connected to the vacuum, so when you draw it, now the vacuum will be released, then the train automatically stops.

Student B: May I know the name of the thing that join the wagons?

Station-master: Automatic buffer coupler.

It is worth noticing that both general vocabulary and lexis in a particular register can be learnt on these occasions. In the register of railways we have *derailment, shunter, shunt limit, shunt* (verb), *the chain, automatic buffer coupler*. As general vocabulary we have *limit, fine, misuse,* and *automatic*. Having a tape-recording of all this dialogue means that the opportunity of teaching language in matters that students have been interested enough to ask questions about will not be lost.

The tape-recording can also be used as a diagnostic instrument by analysing students' errors and assessing the gaps in their language skills. On this visit nearly all the students' speech consisted of questions. It would seem obvious therefore to analyse their performance with different question patterns. To begin with, here is a list of 45 of their questions, transcribed from the tape.

1. May I know, whenever the train will fall on the way, how can the station-master will know that the train is fall on the way?

2. What are these coaches waiting for now?

3. May I know the name of the person that join the coaches?

4. May I know the difference between a steam engine and a diesel engine?

5. Do the driver of the diesel engine can drive the steam engine?

6. Which one is functioning now, the diesel engine or the coal engine?

7. May I know the real work of station-master?

8. Why do diesel engine go in twos?

[1]i.e. between stations.

9. What is the maximum speed of a diesel?

10. May I ask how many years does it take a person to know how to drive?

11. May I know the year that the station was built?

12. How are the loads kept in the store here? Is it that anyone can keep his loads, or ... ?

13. I think that if a person wants to learn to drive train, there is a special place for that.

14. Which lever do we used to pulled to ... ?

15. May I know the work of the speeder?

16. What of the motor rail?

17. Here on the station it is written 'shunt limit', what does that mean?

18. How does the station-master speak to another station-master?

19. I saw on that board that riding on the platform is prohibited, and I saw that many people are riding inside the station, why is it?

20. I saw things like bicycle on Makurdi station, are they rid on the railway-line?

21. It has no engine?

22. In case I have some goods to send to Kafanchan, what will I do?

23. Does it cost very much?

24. When do we misuse it?

25. May I know if a person has, this thing, £40 and that man falls, what can he do?

26. Have you the right to draw the chain yourself or you ask somebody?

27. The chain in the train, does it force the engine to stop, or it rings the bell for the driver to stop the engine?

28. May I know the name of the thing that join the wagons?

29. Suppose I am travelling now and my thing drop from the train and I pull the chain, will it be of any harm to me?

30. What of £1?

31. Ah, Ah, what of six?

32. If the chain is pulled and the train stops and no one knows the person who draws the train, what will happen?

33. Is it true that if you put a tortoise on the train, the train will not move?

34. May I know the way how they manage to talk on the telephone? Will it take more than two minutes?

35. For example, if you ring the bell here, and the man at the other station is not there, how will he manage to know that you have ring the bell there?

36. How many kinds of signal can be given here?

37. How will he communicate with the station after another?

38. You have many sections here, so may I know the number of people helping you in the station?

39. Please will you tell us the engineer who is in charge of this rail?

40. Where do they live?

41. May I know whether they have some rules in the railway station?

42. May I know whether they have a special machine that take the car inside the wagons?

43. Where will he stop?

44. He said if the line is not set, where will the train stop?

45. What causes the train to fall?

Here is a breakdown of the different types of question, arranged roughly in order of frequency:

TABLE I

Pattern	Occurrences of pattern	Total
(a) Modal+noun	Q: 20, 23, 26, 29, 33, 34, 39	7 ⎫
	Errors in 5, 27	2 ⎬
(b) *What*+verb	Q: 2, 9, 17, 22, 25, 32, 45	7
(c) *May I know*+noun	Q: 3, 4, 7, 11, 15, 28, 38	7
(d) *May I know*+*how,*	Q: 41, 42	2 ⎫
whether, etc.	Errors in 1, 10, 34	3 ⎬
(e) *How*	Q: 12, 18, 35, 37	4
Where ⎱+verb	Q: 40, 43, 44	3
Why ⎰	Q: 8, 19	2
When	Q: 24	1
(f) *What of*+noun	Q: 16, 30, 31	3
(g) *Which*+noun ⎱	Q: 6, 14	2
How many+noun ⎰	Q: 36	1
(h) *I think that* . . .	Q: 13	1
(i) Intonation alone	Q: 21	1

What is perhaps surprising on first looking at this table is that in only about five instances has a question-pattern mistake been made. Other mistakes that have been made in the course of asking questions are roughly as follows:

Tense errors	about 4
Omitting third person -*s*	4
No -*s* for plural	2
Modal confusion	2
Other verb faults	2
No article	1

Several instances of inappropriate lexis.

Here are some suggestions as to what can be learnt from this information. On the whole the class appear to be able to use correctly a considerable variety of question patterns. Only two of these are used incorrectly sometimes, and probably need attention. Are there any gaps in this class's repertoire of questions? No question begins with *Who*, though it could be used as an alternative to some of the questions. This, then, is one form of question which could profitably be taught to this class. There are only two instances of questions beginning with *Which*+noun. Perhaps additional formal practice of this is also needed.

A native English speaker would notice at once the frequency of the use of *May I know* . . . as a formula to begin a question. He might ask himself, is this an authentic polite way of asking a

question, which, though it is rare elsewhere, could be considered acceptable as a feature of educated West African English, or is it a mask to hide inability to ask other types of question? Let us see in what other ways the *May I know* questions could have been asked:

TABLE II

Question No.	Alternative pattern	Type in Table I
1	How does the station-master . . .?	e
3	What is the name of . . .?	b
4	What is the difference between . . .?	b
7	What is the real work of . . .?	b
10	How many years does . . .?	g
11	When was the station built?	e
15	What is the work . . .?	b
28	What is the name of . . .?	b
34	How do they . . .?	e
38	How many people?	g
41	Do they have any rules . . .?	a
42	Do they have a special machine . . .?	a

It seems obvious from this table that *May I know* is used in place of patterns that are already widely used. It is therefore probably preferred for social reasons. It might, however, be objected that a better way of asking questions 41 and 42 would be by using the formula *Is there . . .?*. *Is there . . .?* and *Are there . . .?* have not been used at all by the students. This, then, is another gap, and perhaps a sign that *May I know . . .* is both a social formula and, occasionally, a cover for a linguistic gap.

The analysis that has been carried out here does not cover the phonological aspects of the students' speech. It would obviously be possible to check their pronunciation, stress, and intonation by playing back the tape.

It would be advisable in the making of an analysis such as the above to check that the speech concerned came from more than just a few individuals in the class. This could be controlled when the recording is being made by seeing that every student has a chance to ask a question. A further refinement would be to see if particular patterns or errors were confined to certain individuals. All this information would obviously be of value to a teacher in planning his lessons.

A further use of the recording was as a source of information for students when they came to write up the various aspects of their visit. The whole exercise was concluded with a letter of thanks to the station-master written by the students.

To summarise, the tape-recorder was effective in four main

ways in the two instances of its use described in this article. As an incentive it made language learning more attractive and therefore effective. Self-criticism by students led to an awareness of what constituted a good style for a certain purpose. Lexis was learnt both during the visit and on playing back the tape afterwards. And finally, a recording was used to diagnose language successes, errors, and needs.

Acting the Reader

M. J. PAINE and A. J. PARSONS

NA'EEM PRIMARY and intermediate school is pleasantly situated on a piece of reclaimed land opposite the boat-building yards. Arab craftsmen there still practise the dying art of making dhows. Along the coast are the villages of Jidhafs and Senabis stretching down to the sea amongst the palm groves. Between them one can see the outline of the Portuguese fort built over four hundred years ago. Behind the school is old Manama and the coast going north, dominated by the modern buildings of the business section. One side of the school is lapped by the sea, and the classroom windows look out on part of the jetty where heavily-laden dhows, some still under sail, travel the whole of the Gulf from Kuwait to Muscat.

Bahrain men's teacher training college, which is now in its third year, uses Na'eem for teaching practice; once a week during the third term and for six full weeks during the fourth. The boys at the school are a mixed lot: some in spotless robes, sons of the more wealthy citizens; others almost in rags, from the palm-frond huts that huddle together on the spare plots of the city. When we first arrived in Bahrain, the common factor amongst these boys seemed to be their intense dislike of learning English. Our first job was to analyse the causes and try our best to rectify them.

First and foremost, was the prevailing political atmosphere. After the June war, learning English almost amounted to learning the language of the enemy. We had somehow to make our pupils like us as people rather than just accept us as English teachers. Our second problem was the course-book then in use, which we quickly decided was not carefully graded enough for Arab pupils, certainly not well enough to stimulate our pupils' interest and change their attitude towards the language. Lastly, none of the Bahraini teachers had had any modern ELT training. Our

trainees, therefore, themselves products of the same system, were not only called upon to teach totally unmotivated pupils, but also had to use material that we considered completely unsuitable.

Luckily, the inspectorate had begun to reorganise the course-books, introducing a new one. This has necessitated afternoon in-service training courses, so the right steps have been made in the right direction. It is the classes of the second year intermediate that our students were called upon to teach, and *Stories from the Sands of Africa* that we had to try to make more interesting.

Although we had both taught English to Arab students for several years, we were almost completely inexperienced teacher trainers. We thought that, on account of their poor command of English, our trainees would find oral work the most difficult. However, to our surprise, given a set number of sentences or questions and answers, they were able to master the technique well enough to conduct ten minutes of reasonable oral practice. On the other hand, it became very clear that they were encountering difficulties with the reading 'lesson', whole periods being devoted to the separate ELT skills, which was, in itself, a deep-rooted source of trouble. All in all, then, the problems of introducing new words without relying too much on translation, of outlining the story without falling into a rambling string of inaccuracies of question-and-answer work, correcting mistakes, and above all maintaining the students' interest, seemed insurmountable.

We were certainly perplexed at first, as the stories in *Sands of Africa* seemed reasonably interesting, one or two even exciting. We tried tightening up the formal techniques usually employed during reading. At the same time, we allowed our students to translate new words more than we usually would. We encouraged extensive use of blackboard drawings to illustrate the outlining of the story. We made sure Stage 1 and Stage 2 questions were well prepared beforehand. These were carefully divided into *yes/no* questions, open questions, and 'or' questions, written on a card and held in the reader on the opposite page. We made sure that other groups were brought in with questions while the teacher was conducting group reading. Lastly, we divided each lesson into three activities, an oral outline with the new words, the reading proper with questions, then a few of the same questions on the board for written consolidation during the last ten minutes of the period. All this was rehearsed several times before the actual teaching practice.

Yet something was still very wrong. The pupils were not enjoying the stories. The return we were getting in the classroom was certainly not commensurate with all the effort put into the preparation. We thought it might be the fault of our trainees, so

we tried giving demonstration lessons ourselves. The results were much the same. By the end of the lesson, pupils and teacher alike had had enough. What could we do?

Looking back, it seems that the first influx of new ideas came while watching Lionel Billows in one of the British Council 'View and Teach' films. He used the blackboard very effectively with questions and answers to make the pupils act scenes from a story. His pupils were certainly more advanced than ours, however. Eventually, we decided to give this technique a try, using rather more visual material, and carefully programming a step-by-step involvement of individuals. In this way we hoped to achieve comparable results.

It was clear that we had first to simplify the more interesting parts of our story, turning a lot of the narrative into dialogue. Where the dialogue was rather flimsy, we would expand the story somewhat ourselves. We chose 'Mohammed Arbab' for our first experiments. The story had fairly good dramatic elements, including a brother out in the forest all day, a sister left at home, and a ghoul that wanted to eat her! Here is part of the dialogue we worked out:

Mohammed: I'm going to the forest.
Fatima: Why?
M: To catch animals.
F: When are you going to come back?
M: When it is dark.
F: Are the dogs going with you?
M: Yes, come here, Aradaib, Sasoo, Nimra.
F: Good-bye, brother.
M: Good-bye, sister.
Ghoul: Mohammed Arbab has gone to the forest. Fatima is alone in the hut. I'm going to eat her! (Bestial noises.)
(It is dark. Fatima is asleep.)
M: O sleeping sister, open the door,
Your brother is back and will go out no more.
F: O come in, my brother.
Ghoul: Every night Mohammed Arbab says this to his sister. Tomorrow I will say it.

But, of course, Fatima recognises his voice and refuses to open the door. The ghoul then goes to a wise man who tells him to stop eating beetles if he wants to have a sweet-sounding voice. He tries this, but can't resist the occasional fat, juicy beetle, so we have a series of scenes where he tries to trick Fatima, and the following dialogue is repeated several times.

Ghoul (in a
rough voice): O sleeping sister, open the door,
Your brother is back and will go out no more.
F: You are not my brother. You are Zaas the ghoul. Go away, you may not pass. Your voice is like the voice of an ass.
Ghoul: I will make my voice soft and sweet. I will go to the wise man.

Eventually the ghoul succeeds in making Fatima think he is Mohammed. Here is the last scene:

Ghoul:	Now to eat Fatima!
	O sleeping sister, open the door.
	Your brother is back and will go out no more.
F:	O come in, my brother.
Ghoul:	Ha, ha! Now to eat you!
	But your brother is bigger. I will eat him first.
M:	O sleeping sister, open the door,
	Your brother is back and will go out no more.
Ghoul:	Open the door! (Fatima opens the door and the ghoul grabs Mohammed Arbab as he enters.)
Ghoul:	Ha, ha! Now to eat you both!
M:	Let me say three words before you eat me.
Ghoul:	Only three words.
M:	Sassoo! Aradaib! Nimra! (Ghoul is devoured.) Zaas is dead.
	I will make a harp with his hair.
	Now my voice is soft and sweet,
	But beetles are not good to eat.

As our students were already partly familiar with the story, we decided to use the last ten minutes of the period to familiarise them with our 'play'. We therefore worked out a lesson plan to introduce the material gradually during these ten-minute sessions. We realise now that it would have been more useful to use it as a breakdown of the story before tackling the actual reading. At first, however, we used it to consolidate material that had only been half appreciated.

We again used the blackboard as a starting-point. The teacher once more outlined the story, drawing the various characters, the forest, the hut, etc., but this time he made much more use of dramatic gesture with a change of voice for the different characters. Then by question and answer he elicited various repetitions of the lines from the dialogue from both individuals and groups. The pupils already seemed more interested than before.

Working for ten minutes in each period, the pupils were able to get well into the story by the second and third days. Here are some examples of the technique used:

First Day

Look, I'm going to draw a hut. What am I going to do? (Answers from individuals, consolidated with quiet chorus answers from class and groups). Mohammed and his sister live in the hut. Who . . .? This is M, this is F, and these are his dogs. Who . . .? How many dogs . . .? He goes to the forest every day. When, Where, Who . . .? Is this the hut in the forest? This is a ghoul. What is it?

The ghoul lives in the forest. Where . . . ?
It wants to eat F. What . . . Who . . . ?
   etc.

Second Day
M says he's going to the forest. What does he say?
He's going to catch animals. What, Why . . . ?
F wants to know when he is coming back, so she says, 'When are you coming back'. What does she say?
   etc.

Third Day
Who's this? What's he saying? Where's he going?
Why?
Who's this girl? What's she saying?
   etc.

When the pupils were thoroughly familiar with the story, we told them they were going to act it. This had an immediate effect. Sullen faces gazing at the blue sea outside suddenly focussed on the teacher. The habitual chatterers actually began talking about the lesson.

As there were three characters in the story, we divided the class into three groups and handed out duplicated sheets of the first half of the play, the part of each group underlined in the script. We gave them five minutes to read it over, while we went among them to explain in more detail what we wanted, as well as to sort out the pronunciation problems, etc.

The time then came to choose our first actors. Who would be the ghoul? This caused immediate delight as a large and not too handsome lad from one of the villages was voted to play the part. The process of choosing the other players was not less enthusiastic. Everybody sat tense and excited, eager for the play to begin.

The actors took up their positions, using the blackboard drawings as a backcloth, with chairs and the door as other props. Time to begin—all the actors looked down at their papers and mumbled a few stilted phrases. After a few lines, all the drama and excitement we had imagined had completely disappeared, and the pupils began to get restless again. We tried changing the actors. The second time was better, as the lines were becoming a little more familiar. When we changed the actors again, they were able to leave the scripts on their desks. With a few promptings from the teacher, they were able to get through the piece without a complete breakdown in continuity. As we were interested in class reaction rather than a polished performance, we were satisfied, because by the end of the lesson everyone wanted to take part.

By this rather unsatisfactory process of trial and error we eventually evolved a workable technique. In the next lesson they

acted the first half twice for recall and then did the second half in
the same way, reading the scripts once or twice, and then weaning
off with the help of prompts from the teacher. After a while, some
of the brighter pupils were able to work unaided through the
whole play with only a very few mistakes. Finally, we made ghoul
and dog masks with old cornflake packets and elastic bands and
used piles of chairs to represent the hut and other props.

Since these experiments, our training programme seems to be
shifting in emphasis towards techniques designed to motivate the
pupils rather than simply to keep them busy. We now have
flannel board projects under way to illustrate the reading material,
and we are trying to include language games whenever we can.
All this is quite revolutionary here, where most teachers go into
the classroom with a heavy stick and the chanting from one class
prohibits any serious work next door.

It was never our intention to produce a perfect play. Our
intention was to make the story more interesting, to enliven the
usually rather drab English lesson, and above all, to show our
trainees that they can cause learning much more easily when
their pupils are enjoying it.

The Language Laboratory and Advanced Teaching

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THE SYLLABUS for the Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency
in English for 1970 requires candidates to be prepared to answer
questions on such texts as Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, a selection of
poems by Coleridge, a selection from George Orwell's writings,
and so on. This kind of selection seems to me to pinpoint a
curious paradox in the teaching of modern languages: in spite of
the emphasis over the past twenty years on oral-aural approaches
to language teaching, and in spite of the development of sophis-
ticated hardware to facilitate such approaches, many advanced
language-students are still considerably more capable of reading
and writing in the foreign language than they are of speaking and
understanding the spoken language.

There are, no doubt, many reasons for this imbalance. Ability in
speaking a language and comprehending the spoken language are

notoriously difficult to examine fairly, and the requirements of examinations tend to be reflected in language courses. While there are unlimited opportunities for students to gain practice in reading and writing the target language (the language the student is learning: TL), the opportunities to practise conversing in the TL with native speakers are generally very few.

Finally, it may be the case that learning to comprehend the target spoken language and learning to speak it are more difficult than learning to read and write the TL[1].

A good deal of theoretical support can be given to the last suggestion. Firstly, aural comprehension and speaking involve interpreting and manipulating the phonology of the TL, whereas, of course, reading and writing either do not, or do so to a much smaller extent. Secondly, if language is considered as rule-governed behaviour, then knowing a language implies that these language rules have been internalised (see Saporta, 1966). However, as Selinker (1969) has pointed out, internalisation of the rules is a process rather than a state, and language teachers should recognise at least two stages in this process. In the final stage, the language rules have been successfully internalised so that the student can apply them automatically in his production and interpretation of the language, without their application interfering with his fluency. In an earlier stage of internalisation, some students require time for the conscious application of the rules. (And, of course, some students never get further than this, i.e. they never achieve a second stage.) The activities of reading and writing, by their nature, give time for the conscious application of the rules, and so quite advanced ability in these activities *may* only indicate that the student is at the earlier stage. This would account for the fact that some students who can read and write the TL with reasonable facility may converse in it only hesitantly.

These theoretical notions can, however, only help to account for the putative relative difficulties of learning to understand and speak the TL as compared to learning to read and write it. We cannot use these notions alone to explain the poor ability of many advanced students in understanding and speaking the TL; we must also consider very carefully how these activities are handled in courses of English.

The spoken English component of most courses consists of

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[1]Here I must make two qualifications. First, I assume that the learners are literate in their own language. In the case of a student illiterate in his mother tongue, the problems of learning to read and write the TL are severely compounded. Second, there will clearly be differences in the magnitude of the problem of learning to read and write the TL between students whose mother tongue uses the Roman script and those whose mother tongue uses some other script.

what Abercrombie (1965) describes as 'spoken prose'. This is, broadly, the uttering of language which originated in the written form. Language activities which come into this category include making a speech, the reading of a news bulletin on the radio, reciting poetry, the dialogue of a play, and all those dialogues and monologues which abound in language-teaching courses. These kinds of activities are in contrast to spontaneous spoken language. Of the language activities which are characterised by spontaneous speech, the one we are primarily concerned with is conversation.

In the early stages of language learning it is regarded as necessary to control carefully the language with which the student is confronted and which he is expected to speak. There may be strong arguments for maintaining spoken prose as the model for the students' own production of language right into the advanced stage. Indeed, the alternative of using spontaneous speech as a productive model is probably neither practical nor acceptable to a large number of educationists. It may not be practical because most linguistic research has used spoken prose as its data (Boomer and Laver, 1968, p. 2), and consequently such descriptions of the language as are available are descriptions of spoken prose. It may not be acceptable because many people regard spoken prose as an ideal to which all speakers, native speakers included, should aspire. (For discussion, see for instance Joos's *The Five Clocks*.)

For these reasons, and also because those features which distinguish spontaneous speech from spoken prose (described below) are largely irrelevant to, and occasionally counterproductive in, communication, the maintaining of spoken prose for advanced students' production seems largely justified[1].

What seems far less justified is the tacit assumption made by many teachers and course-writers that a course in spoken prose extended into the advanced stage will naturally lead to an ability to understand conversational English without the need for any further instruction.

Conversational English contains many features which are absent from spoken prose, and which are likely to be a barrier to comprehension. These features need to be presented to the student under instructional conditions, i.e. conditions under which he can examine them, ask questions about them, and practise the automatic application of the complex of language rules without being embarrassed by his lack of understanding. (One technique for doing this is described later in this paper.)

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[1]Not wholly so. There are some features of spontaneous speech which, I believe, should be taught at an advanced level. The adoption of certain hesitation phenomena sounds used by native speakers of the TL (in place of the mother tongue ones) often helps to remove some of the 'foreignness' of the students' accents.

Here are two short extracts on the same subject; one is from a transcription of a conversation, and the other is an example of spoken prose.

1. 'It's interesting that on Kano airport which is the so to speak the last of North Africa before you ah get into Nigeria proper, they erm wi . . . with erm, you know, transcontinental jets arriving nowadays by the half hour, the, the, the, the people of Kano, the Emir has a man on a camel just on the edge of the airport . . . (a) chap with a long brass or silver trumpet (mhm) and this camel stands there all day and er er as a sort of symbol of, you know, of Kano. (mhm) There he is, he's he's the camel and the erm ah the rider sounds his trumpet wh . . . er when a plane arrives (good heavens) and erm the er the . . . the whole idea seems to be that in some way he's symbolic (yes) of what Kano stands for (yes). It's the last of the great cro . . . cross the great trans-desert posts . . . for . . . er . . .'[1]

2. It is interesting that on Kano airport, which is the last of North Africa before you get into Nigeria proper, the Emir has got a man on a camel at the edge of the airport. Transcontinental jets arrive nowadays by the half hour, and this man sounds a long brass or silver trumpet whenever one arrives. He sits there, on his camel, the whole day as a symbol of Kano. The idea seems to be that in some way he's symbolic of what Kano stands for; it's the last of the great trans-desert posts.

These two passages can be compared under two categories. The first category could be described as the rhetorical structure of the text; the second category is concerned with semantically extraneous features which are heard as internal to the sentence: that is, extraneous sounds which are produced by the speaker (or by other speakers) while he is uttering the sentence. (They could also, of course, be compared syntactically.)

The particular aspect of rhetorical structure which we are interested in here is the sequencing of the elements, i.e. sentences, phrases, etc., of the two texts. In the passage of spoken prose, this sequencing has a noticeable coherence, with the whole passage leading up to a conclusion. The overall structure of the spontaneous passage is similar (as one would expect, since the passage of spoken prose is a 'heightened' version of the spontaneous passage) but the sequencing of the elements is different, and it does not have the coherence of the passage of spoken prose. Another marked feature of spontaneous speech, which, unfortunately, is not well illustrated here, is the repetition of points a number of times, often in different ways.

The features in the other category (that of semantically extraneous features) in which we are interested appear mainly in the spontaneous passage. These are such things as repeated words and corrections, e.g. *The, the, the, the people of Kano the Emir . . .*; other hesitation phenomena, e.g. *. . . the erm wi . . . with erm you*

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[1]This extract is considerably easier to follow when it is heard. This in itself is an interesting difference between spontaneous speech and spoken prose.

know transcontinental jets . . .; and silence fillers, sounds like *ah* and *erm*. Besides these there are sounds made by other speakers, which Abercrombie (1965) describes as 'intimacy signals', e.g. *mhm, aha, yes*.

Now these features can themselves be divided into two groups; those which are not meaningful, as this term is commonly used, and those which are meaningful. In the second approach, the major class illustrated here is intimacy signals. In the context of conversational English, the understanding of these is of great importance in understanding the mood and attitude of the speaker, and their correct production is essential for maintaining equitable relations with one's interlocutor. It is possible, by stressing these intimacy signals or by using particular intonation patterns over them, to express agreement, hesitant agreement, boredom, incredulity, anger, a placatory attitude, and so on. The consistent use of the wrong signal, that is an intimacy signal carrying the wrong intonation pattern, could lead to serious misunderstanding if the student was talking to an unsophisticated native speaker. At the very least it would exhibit his 'foreign accent'. In spite of all of this, very few language-courses even mention intimacy signals.

The group of those items which are not meaningful can again be divided into two classes. There are all the various kinds of hesitation phenomena, slips of the tongue, false starts, and so on, and there is a group of words and phrases which are often used meaningfully, but which are probably more often used in a non-meaningful way, e.g. *you know, sort of, so to speak, well*, etc.

These differences between spontaneous speech and spoken prose begin to indicate some possible reasons why advanced language-students who have had little experience of listening to spontaneous speech may find it difficult to understand. Boomer and Laver (1968), by way of introduction to their paper, discuss how native speakers react to slips of the tongue: 'In everyday circumstances we simply do not hear many of our own tongue slips, nor those made by others. They can be discerned in running speech only by adopting a specialised "proofreader" mode of listening. In ordinary conversation it is as though we were bound by a shared, tacit, social agreement both as listeners and as speakers to keep the occurrence of tongue slips out of conscious awareness.' (p. 3).

What they say here of slips of the tongue seems to me to be true also of hesitation phenomena, false starts, and silence fillers. It seems as if these features of speech, which are so often clearly irrelevant to the substance of the communication, are sub-consciously filtered out by the native speaker. This suggestion is supported by Miller (1951), quoted by Rivers (1964): 'Perceiving

speech is not an automatic procedure. The perceiver contributes a selective function by responding to some aspects of the total situation and not to others.'

There seems no reason to suppose that the selection mechanism or filtering system that a student has developed for his native language will be efficient in operating in the TL. One must assume that one of the tasks involved in learning another language is to construct such a mechanism for that language. At the advanced stage a student can be helped to construct this mechanism by being given a lot of practice in listening to spontaneous speech. Such practice, together with appropriate exercises, will also help him to follow the rhetorical structure of spontaneous speech, and will help make him aware of such features as intimacy signals, and those (often) non-meaningful idiomatic expressions such as *you know*, *well*, *kind of*, and so on. This practice must, however, be given under instructional conditions, and this indicates the need for genuine spontaneous speech recorded on tape.

One way of making such recordings is to get two or three English speakers together in a recording studio and brief them on the subject of the conversation. Most groups will take a minute or two to start talking, but once they get interested in the topic the conversation will flow naturally. Begin the recording as soon as they start to talk, and record for as long as the conversation is going well. In order to produce a teaching tape lasting four or five minutes, about fifteen minutes raw recording is required.

After the recording, transcribe the tape and edit the transcription. Particular themes can be chosen within the broader theme of the conversational topic, and arranged so that, generally speaking, one theme is exhausted before the next is introduced. The tape itself should then be edited in accordance with the transcript. This is not a simple process, since the editing of spoken material requires that the conversation should flow on naturally after each editing cut. However, the problems are not nearly so great as they seem; what appears to be totally unacceptable in the written transcript sounds quite natural in a recorded conversation. The language itself should not be edited; all the hesitation phenomena, the intimacy signals, the silence fillers, etc., should be left in[1].

Given such a recorded conversation as I have described, there

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[1] The technical problem of editing is one that frightens many teachers. Clearly, if a technician is available, his help should be sought. However, if the teacher himself has to edit the tape, it may be some consolation to know that tape editing is not nearly so difficult as it is often thought to be, and an hour or two of practice on expendable tape will generally give sufficient expertise to deal with the lesson tape. It is always a good idea to edit a copy of the master tape, not the original, so that if mistakes are made, they are not disastrous. Editing, however, is a very time-consuming process.

are two alternatives open to the teacher. The tape may be pre-
sented as it is to the students for listening practice, or it may be
further treated. The purpose of the tape is to give students
practice in comprehending conversation, and the first alternative
would seem to fulfil this purpose. However, if the tape is presented
only in this form, two things are predictable. Firstly, only highly
motivated students will listen to the tape with full concentration,
and secondly, many of the students will not understand some of
the recording, for a variety of reasons. These two problems can
be solved with a single exercise called 'intensive listening'. This
exercise was developed for a course[1] prepared to meet just those
requirements described in this article.

The exercise is prepared in the following way. The edited
transcipt of the conversation is examined and those stretches of
the recording that the students will predictably find difficult are
noted. Decisions are made on the reason for these predicted
difficulties. Such reasons will probably fall into one or more of the
following categories.

Phonological factors: Under this heading we may list such
divergent possibilities as poor recording-quality, making that
portion of the tape difficult to hear; a degree of background noise
which would probably not prevent a native speaker from under-
standing the text, but which may be highly disturbing to the
comprehension of the students[2]; and two or more speakers
speaking at the same time. Besides these, there are those phono-
logical factors which are surface-structure manifestations of deep
meaning distinctions. Among these are those intonation contours
which mark questions, incredulity, and so on, and distinctive
stressing for particular purposes.

Under the heading of *syntactic factors* we might list such
problems as complex and/or rambling sentences in which the
student may 'lose' the subject; the understanding of phrasal verbs,
the understanding of modal verbs, etc.

The category of *semantic and lexical factors* includes all those
words which are predictably unfamiliar to the students in speech,
idiomatic expressions, and problems of anaphoric and cataphoric
reference.

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[1]Dickinson, Leslie, and Mackin, Ronald, *Varieties of Spoken English.*
O.U.P., 1969.

[2]My own observations and those communicated to me by colleagues suggest
that even a moderate level of background noise is an important factor in the
non-comprehension of students whose main attempts at aural comprehension
have been at comprehending spoken prose under nearly noise-free conditions.
Since very little actual spoken-language activity is carried on in noise-free
conditions, there would seem to be good reasons for deliberately adding
background noise to conversation tapes in order to give the student practice
in comprehending the TL in realistic conditions.

Miscellaneous factors: These are many of those features of spontaneous speech discussed above, such things as hesitation phenomena, false starts, slips of the tongue, silence fillers, and so on.

Not all of the problems listed above are suitable for treatment in the intensive listening exercise. Some are more easily treated in a general aural comprehension exercise; this is the case, in particular, with complex and rambling sentences. It is also the case with problems of comprehension caused by the rhetorical structure of (parts of) the conversation. Some problems are best dealt with in seminar discussions of the recorded conversation; Indeed, the students will benefit from follow-up seminar discussions on most of the problems.

Those problems which can best be treated by the intensive listening technique are numbered serially as they occur in the conversation; multiple-choice and completion questions are then prepared and printed in a student worksheet.

Once the questions are prepared, a copy of the conversation tape is treated in the following way. After each utterance which contains one of the problems presented on the worksheet, a signal (a 'pip', for instance) is inserted on the tape. The purpose of this is to cue the student to stop his tape-recorder and refer to his worksheet. After a short pause, the correct answer is recorded on the tape; then, after another short pause, the conversation is continued. When the tape is used by a student in a language laboratory, the sequence of events is as follows. The student hears the text of the conversation: *there are, I think probably three things on which Owen left his mark most decisively* . . . pip, pause. The student stops his tape-recorder and refers to his worksheet. There he answers the question (i.e. 7 below) and starts his tape-recorder again. He then hears the answer in noise-free conditions (i.e. enunciated clearly by the speaker with no intrusive background noise). 'The answer is b. The expression "left his mark" here means "he's remembered for".' The conversation then continues.

The student is required to do the intensive listening exercise during the second hearing of the conversation tape. During the first hearing the conversation is played straight through and the student is asked only to listen to it.

Here are some examples of questions involving:

A. *Phonological factors*
Noise conditions, including poor recording quality, background noise, two or more speakers.

(1) Complete: RM: So children $\overline{\text{(can't)}}$ put their (little) fingers in.

McH: They $\overline{\text{(can't)}}$ put their little fingers in.

(Note: These lines were spoken almost together. It is predictable that students will find them difficult to hear, so they are printed on the worksheet, and a question asked which is easy to answer.)

(2) The speaker said: (a) It'd be interesting $\left.\right\}$ to know how they got out as
                           (b) Interesting   well.

B. *Meaningful phonological distinctions*

(3) Mark the word which is most heavily stressed 'This is perhaps a very *English* thing to talk about'.

(4) The pitch of the speaker's voice (a) rises (b) falls when he says the underlined words. 'This might not be so in Australia, *for example*'.

C. *Semantic and lexical features*

(5) The expression *he left his mark* here means
     (a) he wrote about
     (b) he's remembered for
     (c) he signed.

(6) 'Perspicacity' here means
     (a) long sighted
     (b) mental alertness
     (c) an ability to be accurate.

D. *Miscellaneous factors*

(7) Write down the word preceding
     '———— are, I think, probably three things . . .
     (a) as it sounds to you $\dfrac{\text{(the)}}{\quad}$
     (b) as the grammar of the remainder of the
         of the sentence requires $\dfrac{\text{(there)}}{\quad}$

(Note: this question deliberately draws the students' attention to a slip of the tongue.)

(8) Complete: The third thing is, is, is that he $\dfrac{\text{(is really)}}{\quad}$ father of is syndicalism.

(Note: this question has a number of purposes. It presents visually a specific kind of hesitation phenomena, and so enables the student to verify what he hears visually. It presents the unfamiliar word 'syndicalism' visually, and it requires the student to complete a simple task.)

(9) Complete '. . . the language that you might expect from an uneducated person plus the language that he has learnt in all his years (*of*) . . . and so he says for example . . .'

(Note: this question is testing the students' confidence in their aural perception of English.)

General note: these examples have been listed under these headings for convenience. The order of the questions on any given conversation tape would be dictated by their occurrence in the conversation; these categories would be all mixed up.

Two main claims are made for this exercise. Firstly, that it will help to motivate the student to listen to the tape with a high degree of concentration and, secondly, that it will help to remove

some of the comprehension problems that were predicted from the transcript.

So far as the first claim is concerned, it is suggested that giving the student a series of relevant tasks to perform while he is listening makes his listening purposeful. Ideally, the tasks he is performing will in themselves be interesting and worthwhile, and experience of performing these tasks may make the student more aware of the kinds of comprehension problems he has. The answers given on the tape help to minimise frustration at his lack of understanding.

The second claim has been partially discussed in the preceding paragraph; however, a number of things remain to be said about it. When the student does not know the answer to a question he can only discover the answer, depending on the type of question, by listening very closely to the relevant utterance (for the completion type and for the type requiring a choice between two alternatives) or by intelligent guessing in terms of the context (particularly for questions on idiomatic expressions and word meanings). Both habits seem well worth developing, and, it is hoped, both will help the student to comprehend other conversations.

On the other hand, it may be argued that requiring the student to listen very closely to the text will not be productive in helping him to construct the filtering mechanism mentioned above as a necessary device for removing the irrelevant substance and so helping the student to concentrate on the meaning-carrying elements.

This criticism can possibly be answered by observing that it may well be essential for the student first to identify the irrelevant substance before he can practise 'filtering' it out. Close listening helps the student to identify this irrelevant substance, and his identification is frequently confirmed by the visual presentation of the irrelevant sounds in orthography on the worksheet.

The visual confirmation of material perceived aurally is important even at the advanced stage of language learning. This is probably very true for students who have followed courses in English which concentrate to a high degree on reading and writing. Such students' visual memories are likely to be highly developed, whereas their aural memories—at least for the TL— will not be. Rivers (1964), in discussing the value of using the students' visual memory in the early stages of language learning, says: 'In our own language our understanding of what is aurally presented is largely guided by well-established word associations, familiar syntactic structures which lead us to expect certain classes of words in certain positions, so that if we do not hear clearly we can frequently supply what is missing from the cues given by the context. The student learning a foreign language

finds himself, especially in the early stages, completely bereft of such supports . . .' She goes on to suggest (p. 114) the use of the written script as an aid to memory and understanding.

A language-laboratory teaching tape, based on a recorded conversation, would, I suggest, be of the following form. Firstly, the conversation is played straight through and the student is instructed just to listen to it and attempt to understand it. Then the conversation is played again, but this time in the form of the intensive listening exercise. The conversation is then played for a third time and during this playing the student is required to answer general comprehension questions. The conversation tape can, of course, be used for a large number of other exercises. Students can be asked to transcribe larger portions of it, and they may be asked to make notes on the content of the conversations. Translation exercises could be set for students who are learning the techniques of simultaneous translation. Finally, the conversation acts as a useful stimulus for discussion about the language.

The techniques described above have been discussed in the context of recorded conversations. However, there are many other kinds of spontaneous spoken language which could be treated in this way. Students who are receiving their higher education through the medium of English would, I believe, benefit from having recorded samples of genuine lectures treated in this way. Other applications may be to assist in training students to comprehend certain restricted varieties of the TL in particular contexts; for example, to help air hostesses learning English for their jobs, to teach English to servicemen, and so on.

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Problems of the Future Tense (2)

R. A. CLOSE

A provisional classification

I would, therefore, provisionally classify some of the main expressions of futurity as follows:

I. *Prediction*

a. *Will*+inf. occurs very frequently in spoken as well as written texts, even at points where teachers who insist on weak or contracted forms might lead their students to expect *'ll*. Whether *will* contains any element of prediction in examples like *When the cat's away, the mice will play, If you leave an iron in a damp atmosphere it will rust overnight* and *Danny will sit there looking at the sea for hours*, is a matter of opinion. It is true that in those examples the simple present (*play, rusts, sits*) is also possible—though not, I feel with the same effect. My own view is that there *is* an element of prediction in such examples. In scientific statements, one predicts the future on the basis of past observations; and that is what seems to be happening in those examples.

b. *The reduced form '*ll* /ɫ/*, while common in informal speech and in much—though by no means all—familiar letter-writing, is absent in most other written styles, including printed journalism. It is also absent at certain points in spoken and informal written English. In contrast with *There'll be plenty of room*, for example, note *Will there be room? Yes, there will. There will be. Everybody certainly will get in.*

c. *Shall*+inf. may replace *will*+inf. for 'pure' prediction, in close association with *I* and *we*. This substitution now seems to be regarded—in practice, at least—as optional in British English and comparatively rare in General American.

d. *The weak form* /ʃəɫ/ is subject to similar restrictions to those that affect /ɫ/, discussed above. I personally agree with Zandvoort's implication (quotation 6) that /ɫ/ is the reduced form of *will* and /ʃəɫ/ the weak form of *shall*. However, it is possible that the problem of whether /ɫ/ stands for *will* or *shall* may arise in a case like *We'll be seeing you this evening, shall we?* (or *will we?*), though I would imagine that the choice of *shall* or *will* in such an utterance would be made independently of the *'ll* earlier in the sentence.

e. *Going to*+inf. is also available for 'pure' prediction, but only, I suggest, in the combination P+F, and chiefly *in conversational style*. It would be much rarer in formal written English, rare in

printed journalism (perhaps because of its imprecision) and rare in poster advertising (if only because it takes up too much space): in those styles and registers *will*+inf. is far more likely to be found.

II. *Present indications*

a. *Going to*+inf. is available in conversational style (but not in formal written style, journalism, etc.) for P+F (F° and Fᵘ) and is more widely usable than the two following constructions. Note that the period of time between P and F is likely to be short if no time is set by the context; but it can belong in an example like *They're going to widen this street in two years from now.*

b. *is leaving* (*tomorrow*) implies that arrangements for leaving have been made, by the speaker or by someone else, and to that extent the process of leaving has been set in motion. With *is leaving*, F° is indicated; but with other verbs, e.g. *is painting his house*, the reference could be to either F° or Fᵘ. This ambiguity could be resolved by resorting to *'ll be painting* to express Fᵘ. The use of the *is leaving* construction with future reference is not limited to verbs of motion, as has sometimes been argued; nor is it closed to the same verbs as are inimical to the present progressive. The use of the contruction is, rather, limited to verbs which refer to events for which human arrangements can be made. Thus, *it's raining* and *the waiter's sneezing all over the place* are acceptable when they refer to the present, but not to the future; while *it's going to rain* and *he's going to sneeze* are acceptable without question.

c. *leaves tomorrow* implies that the event has been planned, usually in accordance with a programme. Whereas with *is leaving* (*tomorrow*) there are occasions when future reference is contained in the verbal group alone, without a qualifying adverbial, with *leaves tomorrow* an adverbial of some kind is generally required to complete the future reference. Note that *am/is/are* can be used in conjunction with future time adverbials to indicate what is on the programme; thus, *I'm free tomorrow morning, We're out on Saturday*. But *am/is/are busy/tired/hungry/ill*, etc., could not be used in that way. *He dies tomorrow* is possible—if it refers to a scheduled execution.

With many verbs *is leaving tomorrow* and *leaves tomorrow* are equally acceptable in the same situation, though the latter usually suggests a firmer arrangement and is more definite with regard to time. The former pattern could not replace *I'm free tomorrow*, etc., since the progressive aspect is not applied to *be* in that sense.

d. *is to leave* (*tomorrow*). This construction is commonly used in journalism. In newspaper headlines it is reduced to the infinitive

with *to*, e.g. *QUEEN TO LAUNCH NEW LINER*. The meaning of such an example is: plans have been made or decisions have been taken or orders have been given; as a result, the present position (P), which the press now reports, is that such-and-such an event will occur (F). Note that this construction is frequently used as a command, so that while *This ceremonial gate is not to be opened today* implies that an opening ceremony has been cancelled or will not take place whatever the reason, *This gate is not to be opened today. Do you understand?* may be a prohibition. As a further complication, *The poor old lady is not to be comforted* implies that nothing one can say or do will console her.

e. *about to leave, is just going to leave, is just leaving* all suggest a very short period of time between P and F. *About to leave* is usable in written styles where *going to* would be considered too informal; and *just going to* is available in cases like *just going to rain/sneeze*, etc.: see b. above. Note that *just* in these constructions can mean either 'in the immediate future' or '(*I'm going to*) *perform that action and no more*'. Martin Joos observed that *about to* appears to occur in the affirmative only. The same might be said of the other two constructions when they refer to the immediate future. When *just* has the other meaning, they *can* occur in the negative, e.g. *I'm not just going to* **leave**/*not just* **leaving**, *I'm taking all my things and staying away for good*.

f. All the constructions in *a, b, c, d*, and *e* above can be used in conditional and temporal clauses when emphasis is on P. Examples have already been given for *going to*. Examples for the other constructions are:

John: *I'm setting off at six tomorrow.*
James: *Well if you're starting (P) at six, you'd better go to bed early. If you start (F) at six, you'll miss the rush-hour traffic.*
John: *Yes, I leave here at six.*
James: *Then if you leave (P) at six, you'll have to be up by five. If you leave (F) at six, you'll get to Boston by nine-thirty.*
John: *I must be in Boston well before ten. The President is to be there.*
James: *Oh, if the President is to be there (P), I'd like to go too. If he is there (F), don't make your own speech too long.*
Anne: *There goes the bell. The ship's about to sail.*
Mary: *If the ship's about to sail (P) we must get off quickly. If it sails (F) with us on board, we'll have to stay on it all the way to Perth.*

g. Note that in journalism P+F is frequently expressed by *will now*, conveying the idea that because of something that has happened and that can now be reported (P) a certain event will take place (F). Example: *Lester Piggott will now ride Solar Charge*. This use of *will now* should be distinguished from the *will now* indicating immediate future, as in the example: *The treasurer will now present his report for the year*. I have not come

across any examples of *will now* in conditional or temporal clauses, as in f. above.

III. *Personal attitudes*

Certain personal attitudes towards an unfulfilled (future) event could be considered as aspects of present indications of what the future may bring. This would be the case, for example, with *going to* when it implies an intention that is likely to be carried out; and here the two elements P and F can still be traced. In other cases, the dominant features may be a personal expression, e.g. of hope, determination, invitation, request, promise, defiance, etc., often 'inextricably mixed' with future reference, often idiosyncratic. There is a great deal of variety, ambiguity, and scope for misunderstanding in this field, especially in spoken English. The following are observations on only a few of the points that arise:

a. *Will* can refer to

i. the speaker's certainty about a future occurrence, as in the emphatic *I bet you it* **will** *rain*, or in the order *You will do what I tell you*, or in the promise *You will have your money tomorrow*. In the last two examples (i.e. excluding the emphatic **will**) *will* can be replaced by *'ll* at appropriate points in the sentence.

ii. the speaker's own, or somebody else's, willingness, as in:

Old lady: *Will somebody please help me with this suitcase?*
  Eric: *Certainly I will. Leave it all to me.*
Old lady: *If you'll carry it to the train, it'll be such a help.*

Note that this *will* is reducible to *'ll* and is readily usable in conditional clauses.

iii. the speaker's, or somebody else's, determination (or refusal):

John: *Please don't do that.* George: *I certainly will.*
John: *Listen to me.*   George: *I won't.*

In this sense, *will* and *won't* may be replaced by *shall* and *shan't* when the subject of the verb is *I* or *we*.

iv. an invitation, request, or command—depending on context and intonation—when the sentence is in the form of a question:
Will you come in? Won't you sit down? (invitation).
Will you turn the radio off for a minute? (request).
Will you turn that radio off at once! (command).

b. *Shall* can express

i. a suggestion or an inquiry about the wishes of the person addressed: *Shall we go back now? Let's go back now, shall we?*
ii. a decision with regard to the speaker's own future:
John: *Please don't do that.* George: *I certainly shall.*
Here *shall* is replaceable by *will*.

iii. a decision with regard to the future of someone (or something) else:

The government has not yet decided where the new cities shall be (B.B.C. news item). Here *shall* is replaceable by *should*, which is perhaps more likely to occur in such a sentence in modern English.

c. *Would* can serve as a more hesitant or more polite replacement for *will* in examples like . . . *if you will be so kind, Will you . . . ?* (invitation, request, and rather feeble command). *Would* is not replaceable by *will* in *Would you like . . . ? Would you mind . . . ?*

d. *Should* can refer to escapable obligation with regard to the future, e.g. *You must read faster—you should finish this book by the end of the week;* or it can make a supposition based on present trends, e.g. *Have you finished chapter 10 already? At that rate you should finish the book by this evening.*

e. *Can* has several meanings, including the ideas of capacity, permission, availability. Note that *can* occurs with future reference and in association with future time adverbials when permission or availability is meant, but not capacity. Thus:

You can drive my car (capacity or permission).
You can drive my car tomorrow (permission, not capacity).
You'll be able to drive my car perfectly after a few more lessons (capacity).

Thus *will be able* is a marked future for *can* and is obligatory when future reference is intended. However, the unmarked form *can* occurs in a conditional or temporal clause even when capacity is meant: *If you can drive my car perfectly by the end of the month, you can keep it.*

f. *May* appears to be usable equally with present and with future reference, and present and future time adverbials.

g. *Could* can refer, more hesitantly than *can*, to future permission or availability (e.g. *You can drive my car tomorrow, I could meet you on Wednesday*) and can refer, rather hesitantly, to capacity in a conditional clause (e.g. *If you could drive well enough by the end of the month . . .*).

h. *Might*, expressing more uncertainty than *may*, also appears to be usable equally with present and future reference.

i. *Might as well* can suggest either that the speaker has no objection to a course of action just mentioned (John: *Shall we go?* James: *We might as well.*) or that he considers the course of

action he is about to mention is just as good as the one mentioned previously, if not better (*It's no good staying here. We might (just) as well go home*). Which meaning is intended depends on context and intonation.

j. *Must* (inescapable obligation) or *must* (inference) are both usable with future reference and future time adverbials:

We must finish this by tomorrow night (inescapable obligation).
If they're coming by road, they must get here well before the boat (inference).

Note that *will have to* serves as a marked form, optional with a future time adverbial, but obligatory when future reference depends on the verbal group alone.

k. *Ought to* (obligation and inference) seems to be usable with future reference in a similar way to *must*.

l. *Have to*, expressing obligation, frequently as a result of something ordered or prescribed, can be used with future reference; though, as for *must* and *ought to*, the marked future, *will have to*, is available, and is obligatory when future reference depends on the verbal group alone.

m. *Had better* (indicating that the speaker considers the course of action about to be mentioned is advisable) and *would rather* (indicating that the speaker considers the course of action about to be mentioned is preferable to the one mentioned previously) can both be used with reference to the future.

n. The following are some of the ambiguities that can occur with these expressions of personal attitude:

i. *You will sit there, madam.* Is that intended as a simple statement about the future, or is it an order? It could be either. *You're going to sit there* fails to produce the 'clearness' Jespersen hoped for, since it makes the 'arrangements' sound too definite. *You'll be sitting there, madam*, is one device for removing the 'colouring'.

ii. *Shall we meet this evening?* Is this a suggestion or simply a question about a possible future event? Again it could be either. *Let's meet this evening, shall we?* is clearer as a suggestion; while *Shall we meet this evening?* is clearer as a simple question about the future.

iii. *I'm going to see my lawyer about this.* This could be a simple prediction, a statement of intention, or even a threat.

iv. *You should finish this book by Friday.* This could imply obligation or make a supposition.

v. *They must be here by eight.* This could be an order or an inference.

IV. *More precise, less ambiguous paraphrases*

Whether or not the many constructions under this heading
would properly be classified as 'expressions of futurity', they are
frequently used, in written English at least, when the writer feels
that his precise meaning cannot be conveyed by one of the
constructions in Groups II and III. From the point of view of the
student and teacher of English, the problem arises of what
sentence patterns the construction will fit into. A mistake fre-
quently made in the construction of English sentences is to try to
add a subordinate clause containing a verb in the 'future tense'
to a main verb that really needs to be followed by an infinitive or
–ing form. Notice the following patterns:

expect to see: also *agree, have decided, determine, hope, intend,*
long, offer, plan, prefer, promise, propose, refuse.
expect you to see: also *advise, allow, beg, command, compel, encourage, forbid,*
intend, invite, mean, order, permit, recommend, request, tell.
expect (that) you'll see: also *hope, suppose.*
suggest seeing: also *insist on, object to, recommend.*
suggest your seeing: also *agree to, insist on, object to, recommend.*
long for you to go: also *arrange.*
ask that you (should) go: also *agree, arrange, decide.* In this construction, the
verb in the third person singular may take the subjunctive form, *he go.*

The foregoing is only a sketch of some of the main problems
that arise in dealing with futurity in English. It is intended rather
to indicate where further investigation is needed than to supply
answers. It may, however, have provided some guidance to
teachers on what different purposes the various expressions of
futurity serve. In particular, it may have shown that while *going to*
is widely used and widely serviceable in conversational English
and classroom dialogue, there are restrictions on its use and on the
extent to which it is replacing the future formed by *will*.

Stylistic Choice in Verb Tenses

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THE TIME reference of the verb is a complex of several factors:

(a) tense[1];

(b) the linguistic context—in particular, the adverbs and conjunctions of time[2];

(c) the order of the verbs in a co-ordinated sequence with linking *and*, or in independent sentences[3];

(d) the situational context[4];

(e) the semantic nature of the verb[5].

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[1] A few days *have passed*. I *have spent* most of the morning reading. Through the window *comes* a grey, even light that *is* pleasant and soothing. I *shut* my book—it *is* 'Le Grand Meaulnes'—and *go* out on to the gravel in front of the house (J. G. Bruton, *The English Verb in Context*, Cambridge, 1964, p. 26).

The time reference of the italicized verbs appears to be indicated mainly by the tenses.

[2] I *heard* his particular story *before* I saw him and I *expected* someone of striking appearance (S. Maugham, *On a Chinese Screen*, Longmans, London 1935, p. 9). The order of the events is: 'I heard', 'I expected', 'I saw'. That 'I saw' occurs after 'I heard' is indicated by the conjunction 'before'. That 'I expected' occurs before 'I saw' is indicated by the situation context (i.e. the 'expectation' could only occur after the 'hearing' and before the 'seeing').

[3] The turret *opened*. A man's head and shoulders *appeared*, looking toward the sniper. The sniper *raised* his rifle and *fired*. The head *fell* heavily on the turret wall. The woman *darted* toward a side street. The sniper *fired* again. The woman *whirled* round and *fell* with a shriek into the gutter. (Liam O'Flaherty, *The Sniper*, from *Seventy-Five Short Masterpieces*, p. 198, Bantam Classics, N.Y. 1961.)

The actions designated by the italicized verbs occur in the order in which they appear in the above passage. A change of order would result in a change of meaning.

[4] He *went out* silently and I *felt* a little ashamed of myself. I *looked* across the desk at Larry. He *avoided* my eyes (William E. Barrett, *Senor Payroll*, from *Seventy-Five Short Masterpieces*, op. cit., p. 13).

The first two actions ('went out' and 'felt') appear to occur simultaneously. The next two ('looked' and 'avoided') also appear to occur simultaneously, but after the first two. This we gather from the situational context (i.e. as our experience tells us they would occur). See also footnote 1 above.

[5] "Seven months ago the vast majority of Arabs *had never heard* of the Baath (Renaissance) Arab Socialist Party. Beyond a few specialists it *was unknown* to the outside world' ('Daily Telegraph', 14 August 1963, p. 10, col. 2, London).

In the above example the choice of tenses (Past Perfect, Past Simple) is determined by the semantic nature of the verbs *hear* and *know*. The verbs may change places but will retain their tenses, as follows: 'Seven months ago the vast majority of Arabs *did not know* . . . it *had not been heard of* by the outside world.'

Tense is, therefore, only one of the elements determining the time reference of the verb. It follows that while we can describe with some precision the time reference of a *particular verb* in a *particular context*, the time reference of the various tenses as such (that is, in isolation) can be described only in very general terms. This is true of all linguistic forms, which are, as they must be, notionally flexible, acquiring precise meaning only in a context[1].

In fact, there is considerable overlap in the time reference of the various tenses, and no *one* tense has a monopoly of any particular time-range. The writer/speaker may, in a particular context, have a choice of various possible tenses, and his choice will be determined by stylistic considerations[2].

The purpose of this paper is to illustrate the operation of stylistic choice in the verb tenses. With a few exceptions, the examples quoted are from contemporary, twentieth-century English. The examples are classified according to the tenses involved in the choice: under the heading 'present simple—past simple', for instance, I have listed examples in which a present simple has been used instead of a past simple, or vice versa. Each example, or group of examples, is followed by remarks on the possible stylistic reasons for the particular choice.

I. *Present Simple—Past Simple* and *Present Perfect—Past Perfect*

1. Mary Rand who *breaks* the Olympic record with her very first qualifying jump on *Wednesday morning* can't help remembering that Wednesday morning four years ago in Rome when she couldn't even qualify for a final ('The Observer')[3].

The above is a particularly bold use of a present tense to designate a past action. The purpose is greater vividness: the use of the present 'breaks' emphasises the present significance of the act.

2. A West German rocket company yesterday test-fired four military rockets and announced it *has signed* a contract to deliver missiles to an unidentified foreign buyer ('Jerusalem Post')[4].

In the above example, the choice of a present instead of the past perfect tense converts the 'signing' of the contract from a reported fact to a present reality.

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[1]Compare, for example, the different notional relations between adjective and head-noun in: a lovely woman (= a woman who is lovely); a dramatic critic (= a critic of the drama); an angry look (= a look expressive of anger); a suspicious man (= one who suspects others); a suspicious character (= one who arouses suspicion in others).

[2]That is, considerations other than that of time-references or modality.

[3]18 October 1964, p. 18, col. 2. London.

[4] 6 December 1963, p. 1.

3. Othello had suffered from an overpowering delusion, and *has*, just now, *he thinks*, performed an act of justice (E. E. Stoll)[1].

4. No man ever told a woman she talked too much when she was telling him how wonderful he *is* ('Reader's Digest')[2].

In the above two examples (3 and 4), the shift from past to present appears to represent a change in the writer's point of view: in 3, the change is from the writer's own point of view to that of Othello; in 4, the change is to the point of view of the man listening to the woman praising him.

5. Dryden in this, as in other things, deserves the title of being the first modern critic. He is aware, as his predecessors *are* not, that poets are 'of an age'. He *means* more by this than Ben Jonson *did* when he *said* that Shakespeare *was* not 'of an age', but 'for all time'. To Dryden every poet *is* to some degree 'of an age' and one of his fundamental critical positions is that 'genius of every age is different'. Along with many of his contemporaries he *had* an acute sense of the time he lived in as 'an age', and he *is* constantly concerned with the relation of his own poetry and plays to contemporary tastes and fashions (H. Gardner)[3].

In the above example, the writer mostly uses the present tense when referring to Dryden (who is the subject of the paragraph), and uses the past tense when referring to Ben Jonson. Thus she is using a linguistic device to emphasise the difference (which is the theme of the paragraph) between Dryden's literary theories, of which she approves, and those of his predecessors which she does not approve.

II. *Present Simple-Present Progressive* and *Past Simple-Past Progressive*

6. Then round the corner of a side street *came* an old woman, her head covered by a tattered shawl. She *began* to talk to the man in the turret of the car. She *was pointing* to the roof where the sniper *lay*. An informer. The turret opened. A man's head and shoulders appeared, looking toward the sniper (Liam O'Flaherty)[4].

In the above extract from a narrative (in which the protagonist is an Irish Civil War sniper on a roof top), the past progressive ('she was pointing'), following a string of past simples, suggests a shift from the omniscient author's point of view to that of the sniper. This makes the clipped sentence that follows 'An informer' more dramatic, since it describes the sniper's subjective realisation of

[1]*Casebook on Othello*, p. 150, edited by Leonard Dean, N.Y., 1964.
[2]N.Y., May 1967, p. 45.
[3]*The Business of Criticism*, p. 25, Oxford Paperback, 1963.
[4]*Seventy-Five Short Masterpieces*, p. 198. N.Y., 1961.

danger, and is not merely another item of information passed on by the omniscient author to the reader.

7. For it is evident that when Virginia Wolf *addresses* her imaginary readers *she is not identifying* herself with the general reading public. She *is addressing* a small minority group within the general social community. She *is speaking* as an artist in a society where the artist has lost his function, She *speaks* as an experimenter in an age of literary revolution (Elizabeth Drew)[1].

8. *I'm not wishing* you greater torment than I have, Heathcliff. I only *wish* us never to be parted (E. Brontë)[2].

In 7 above, the writer could have used the present simple throughout. The alternation of present simple and present progressive, however, creates the effect of a move from the general to the particular and back to the general again, which gives variety and vividness to the passage.

In 8 the writer could have used the present simple or present progressive for both verbs. This, however, would have been, monotonous. Tense variation, together with the repetitive use of the verb 'wish', produces a highly emphatic effect.

In the following three examples, a simple and a progressive tense similarly alternative for variety and contrast.

9. Then when the smoke *cleared* he *peered* across and *uttered* a cry of joy. His enemy had been hit. He *was reeling* over the parapet in his death agony. He *struggled* to keep his feet, but he *was slowly falling* forward (Liam O'Flaherty)[3].

10. At noon on Boxing Day we did something we rarely *do*, simply because as a rule we *are working* at that time and in the early morning too—we *went* to a cocktail party (J. B. Priestley)[4].

11. In these times of ours, though concerning the exact year there is no need to be precise, a boat of dirty and disreputable appearance, with two figures on it, *floated* in the Thames between Southwark Bridge, which is of iron, and London Bridge, which is of stone, as an autumn evening *was closing in* (C. Dickens)[5].

In the last example, a past simple is used for narrating the events of the story ('a boat . . . floated'), and a past progressive for describing the setting ('evening was closing in'). Dickens maintains this contrasted tense pattern throughout the first two paragraphs of the novel.

In the following two examples the past progressive is used to

[1]*The Novel*, p. 262. N.Y., 1963.
[2]*Wuthering Heights*, Ch. XVI, p. 159. Nelson Classics, London.
[3]*Seventy-Five Short Masterpieces*, op. cit., p. 199.
[4]*New Statesman*, p. 37, col. 3. London, 12 January 1968.
[5]*Our Mutual Friend*, Ch. 1, para. 1.

designate and give prominence to the main action; the past simple is used for the less important, the accompanying, actions.

12. At this table sat Mrs O'Brian's children—her three grown sons, eating and conversing, and her two younger daughters, who *were staring* at the policeman as they *ate* (Ray Bradbury)[1].

13. As she *marched* up the street she *was meditating* that it didn't seem like it was possible there could be so many folks in all one place at the same time (S. Lewis)[2].

The following three examples illustrate the use of a past simple in preference to a past progressive, on account of the close proximity of an *-ing* form. The reason for the choice may be euphony.

14. An old man *sat* in the rocking chair, reading a newspaper (John Collier)[3].

15. On the roof-top near O'Connell Bridge, a Republican sniper *lay* watching (Liam O'Flaherty)[4].

16. As Rolfe *began* to lean over her, knowing the moment had come, he understood for the first time the meaning of isolation (William Sansom)[5].

In the following three examples a past progressive is used in close proximity with an *-ing* form. In each case there appears to be a special reason for the choice of the past progressive in preference to the past simple.

17. And one morning I *was sprawling* on my couch, trying to find some sort of excuse for not attending my class, when the door opened, and the bass voice of Teresa the loathsome resounded from my threshold (Translated from M. Gorky)[6].

18. A week or two passed. It was evening. I *was sitting* at my window whistling and thinking of some expedient for enabling me to get away from myself[7].

19. I entered her apartment. I looked round. She *was sitting* at the table, leaning on her elbows, with her head in her hands[8].

In 17 above, the use of the progressive tense is obligatory. The semantic nature of the verb 'sprawl' is such that the past simple and past progressive have different meanings in this context, the

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[1] *Seventy-Five Short Masterpieces, op. cit.*, p. 30.
[2] *Babbitt*, p. 42. New York, 1964.
[3] *Seventy-Five Short Masterpieces, op. cit.*, p. 46.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 197.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 227.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 108.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 109.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 110.

past simple indicating the act, the past progressive indicating the state.

In 18, the choice of the progressive appears to be due to the fact that the narrative is a first person narrative, and the narrator speaks not as an observer but as an actor. This is again a case of point of view.

In 19, the use of the progressive gives the verb greater prominence, and stresses the sullen, dejected mood of the character in question. While textbooks mainly stress the notional differences between simple and progressive tenses, David Crystal, in a detailed study of the tenses, observes that the simple and progressive tenses are largely interchangeable, when concurring with certain adverbials[1]. In 17, for instance, with the adverbial 'all the morning' a past simple could be substituted for the past progressive without change of meaning.

III. *Past Perfect—Past Simple*

20. A spokesman for the military junta announced that the pair *had slipped out* of rebel hands during the cease-fire, *boarded* a departing truck while wounded were being removed, and somehow *reached* a Catholic church in the Chinese quarter of suburban Chillon. There, according to the story, both *killed* themselves at 10.45 a.m. ('Time')[2].

In the above, 'killed' is the most important and most dramatic of all the events related. It is therefore presented, not as the last in a sequence of events, but separately; and the past simple is used to distinguish it from the previous events for which the past perfect is used (with ellipsis of the auxiliary). The past simple is generally used for narrative, and is more dramatic than the past perfect which presents the verb in its 'perfect' aspect.

The use of the past simple in the above passage as it stands is obligatory. But it could have been written differently and a past perfect used in place of the past simple (e.g. '. . . in the Chinese quarter of surburban Chillon where, at 10.45 a.m., according to the story, both had killed themselves'). Once again, a stylistic choice has been made.

21. And he *had bought* a car, which later, when he *forgot* to pay for it, the dealer *had driven off* angrily from in front of the house (Ray Bradbury)[3].

In the above, the alternation of past simple and past perfect appears to be mainly for the purpose of avoiding sequence of past

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[1]*Journal of Linguistics*, 3, 1, p. 15, April 1964.
[2]N.Y., 8 November 1963, p. 26, col. 2.
[3]*Seventy-Five Short Masterpieces, op. cit.*, p. 30.

perfect tenses, which would be uneuphonious as well as monotonous.

In the following four sentences (22/25) the past simple is similarly used in place of a past perfect to avoid an uneuphonious sequence of past perfects:

22. At sunrise, a negro on his way to the big house to feed the mules *had taken* the word to Colonel Henry Maxwell; and Colonel Henry *phoned* the Sheriff. The Sheriff *had hustled* Jim into town and locked him up in jail, and then he *went* home and *ate* breakfast (Erskine Caldwell)[1].

23. But after the first few weeks of rapture, during which he *was satisfied* with what she gave him, he *had known* little happiness (S. Maugham)[2].

24. The inspector *had noticed* that when Trent *had picked up* a strong scent he *whistled* faintly a certain melodious passage[3].

25. Sadao *had taken* this into his mind as he *did* everything his father *said*, his father who never *joked* or *played* with him but who *spent* infinite pains upon him who was his only son (Pearl Buck)[4].

The following is an interesting example of the past perfect in place of the past simple:

26. Yvette *moved* her hands quickly on her arms. And as quickly, from under the neck of his cap, he *had seen* her, his swarthy predative face was alert (D. H. Lawrence)[5].

In the above example (26) the first two verbs (italicized) appear from the context to indicate simultaneous or nearly simultaneous actions. The effect of using a past perfect tense ('he had seen her') is, it seems, to emphasise the swiftness of the action. Possibly, too, to make the reader perceive the action as Yvette must have perceived it, that is, as completed.

IV. *Past Perfect Progressive—Past Progressive*

27. While they *were driving* he *had not been taking notice*—never did (J. Galsworthy)[6].

In the above example, 'they were driving' is used, for purposes of euphony, in preference to 'they had been driving', which would be cumbrous.

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[1]*Seventy-Five Short Masterpieces, op. cit.*, p. 35.
[2]*South Sea Stories*, p. 57. N.Y., 1950.
[3]Zandvoort, *A Handbook of English Grammar*, p. 82. 1966.
[4]*Twentieth Century American Literature*, p. 21. The Enemy, Tel-Aviv, 1951.
[5]*The Shorter Novels*, Vol. II, *The Virgin and the Gipsy*, p. 37. London, 1960.
[6]*World's Great Love Novels, The Apple Tree*, p. 379. N.Y., 1946.

V. *Present Perfect—Past Simple*

28. But, in the case of Chief Enahoro, *has* the British Government *been* wholly blameless in its decision to send him home for trial? *Was* there not, as the fourth Commons debate seemed to show, a real misunderstanding between the Home Office, and the Chief's Sponsors as to the terms on which he might leave Ireland and seek refuge in this country? ('Daily Telegraph')[1].

29. When I *have heard* judges on the bench moralising with unction, I *have asked* myself whether it was possible for them to have forgotten their humanity so completely as their words *suggested* (S. Maugham)[2].

In both the above examples the alternation of present perfect and past simple makes for effective variation.

VI. *Present Simple—Future Simple*

30. Abraham Kaplan, the Israeli choir conductor living in the U.S., *conducts* tonight a special concert at Carnegie Hall to close the season of the Collegiate Chorale which he has led since 1961. The programme includes Haydn's 'Nelson Mass' and the Choral Fantasia by Beethoven, in which the piano solo part *will be played* by Jerome Lowenthal ('Jerusalem Post')[3].

The above exemplifies the fairly common use of a simple present tense in a future context. This use of the present tense is the result of an historical accident, an inheritance from Old English, which had no future tense[4].

Where several forms can be used in a single context, it is natural to look for some notional or stylistic difference between the various forms. It is often stated that the use of a present tense in a future context indicates a fixed plan[5]. It would, I think be more correct to say that the use of the present tense in a future context appears to be restricted to those cases where a plan *may* be assumed. Often the present simple seems merely the more natural tense to use.

In the above example (30) the use of the future tense for the first two verbs is possible but not obligatory, since futurity is expressed by the adverb 'tonight'. In the last verb, the future tense appears to be required, since the passive form of the present simple might not, in this context, clearly indicate future time.

The future tense is sometimes used, like the present simple, in

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[1]London, 9 September 1963, p. 10, col. 2.
[2]*The Summing Up*, p. 38. N.Y., 1946.
[3]19 May 1967, p. 4, col. 2.
[4]G. O. Curme, *Syntax*, p, 356. N.Y., 1931.
[5]R. A. Close, *English as a Foreign Language*, p. 78, sec. 154. London, 1962.

a 'timeless' context. Then the two tenses, from the point of view of time reference, are interchangeable. However, the future tenses may (since the auxiliary 'will' has a tendency to function modally) introduce nuances of meaning which are not present when the present simple is used.

31. Speaking of the painful positions into which a sleepy lounger *will get* himself, it is amusing to think of the more fantastic attitudes that so often *take place* in bed (Leigh Hunt)[1].

32. Again and again in the book Robins *will make* a terminological distinction and then argue that the distinction must be made because of the nature of the facts. He *will hold* in Chap. 3 both that '...' and that '.......'. By insisting on the referability of an abstraction to concrete exponents, Robins *deprives* himself of the freedom he has just granted to the linguist to justify his abstract terms by the part they *play* in explaining what *happens* in language, rather than by their representation of classes of specific form (*Journal of Linguistics*)[2].

The above examples illustrate the use of the future tense to stress that the action is not merely habitual but also characteristic[3]. In both examples the writer uses the present simple when he no longer requires to stress the characteristic nature of the act. In 31, we could substitute a present simple for the future tense, adding the word 'habitually', in order to achieve the full effect of the future tense, i.e. '...' the sleepy lounger *habitually* gets himself. In 32, we could substitute a present tense for the future tenses (italicized), the only difference between the present and future tenses being in the tone: the present simple would express a neutral attitude, while the future suggests disapproval on the part of the writer.

33. Crooked Streets *will never tire* a man, and each *will have* its character, and each *will have* a soul of its own (H. Belloc)[4].

The future tense is used here for greater emphasis. 'Will', in this context, appears to indicate volition; and there is, here, a kind of personification. Again, we may see in the writer's choice of tense, an intention not merely to state a fact (for which the present simple would suffice) but to emphasise the essential characteristics of the Crooked Streets. The passage may be paraphrased as follows: 'Crooked Streets *can* never tire a man, and each, *inevitably*, acquires a character and a soul of its own.'

[1]*A Book of English Essays*, p. 180. London, 1951.
[2]3, 1, April, 1967, p. 170.
[3]F. R. Palmer, *A Linguistic Study of the English Verb*, p. 111, sec. 6, 3, 4. London, 1965.
[4]*A Book of English Essays*, op. cit., p. 228.

34. One of the most facinating places in London is Highgate Cemetery, the burial place of many famous people, including Karl Marx. . . Usually when you visit Marx's grave you *will not be* alone. A coach *will disgorge* a party of serious-looking Russians or Poles, in square, dark-grey rain-coats. Led by a guide, they *will march* in a phalanx down the cemetery's main path and halt in a semi-circle beneath that great stern head, where they *will get* a five-minute lecture for the good of their souls. Then a member of the party *will lay* a wreath ('Jerusalem Post')[1].

Jespersen points out that any statement about the future is necessarily in the nature of supposition or surmise[2]. It follows that the future tense may have a connotation of indefiniteness as opposed to the greater definiteness of the present tense. The above example seems to illustrate this. While the present simple in this context would tend to convey what *actually happens*, the future simple seems to suggest what *can be expected* or *is likely to happen*.

Summing up. The above survey of notionally interchangeable tenses, though by no means exhaustive, gives some idea of the stylistic effects that may be achieved by a judicious use of the tenses. These stylistic effects may be roughly classified as follows:

(a) *Vividness.* This is mainly achieved by the use of present tenses in a past context (see 1/2), and to a lesser degree by the use of present tenses in a future context (see 30). We may also include under this heading the use of the past simple in 20.

(b) *Point of View.* The author may indicate his point of view through his choice of verb tense (see 3/4 and 6).

(c) *Prominence.* The author may give special prominence to a particular verb (and, thereby to the 'activity' it denotes) by the use of distinctive tense form (see 12/13).

(d) *Variety.* The tense pattern may be varied to avoid monotony (28/29; 7/11).

(e) *Euphony.* Since a string of compound tenses tends to sound cumbrous, these may be replaced, where possible, by simple tenses (22/25; 27; 14/16).

The future tenses in 31/34 may be considered stylistic variants of the present simple, if we consider them only from the point of view of their time reference—both are 'timeless'. However, there is a 'modal' difference which, though slight, may have to be taken into account.

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[1]*Jerusalem Post*, 19 May 1967, p. 4, col. 3.
[2]*Philosophy of Grammar*, p. 265. London, 1924,

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The Composition, Adaptation, and Choice of Second-Language Tests

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THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS in the choice of a test or in making your own test would seem to be the kind of test to use (oral comprehension, reading comprehension, etc.) and what language items the test should contain; but, in fact, these questions are of secondary importance and depend entirely on the purpose of the test and the kind of people whose ability the test sets out to measure.

Second-language tests may serve many purposes. Generally speaking, there are five main purposes: survey; research into the effectiveness of different teaching techniques, manuals, and audio-visual aids; research in psychology; research in sociology; and finally, evaluation, which directly concerns the teacher and with which this article is mainly concerned.

Survey tests are used to gather information about the second-language competence of various ethnic groups in a particular country where more than one language is currently spoken. Their mother tongue may be accorded various degrees of official status, as with Flemish in Belgium and French in Canada, or hardly any status at all, as with Spanish in the U.S.A. and Catalan in Spain. The information may be used to show how much the second language has made inroads on the mother tongue, English on French in the maritime provinces of Canada, or how well French Canadian and English Canadian first-year university students perform in each other's language. Such survey tests were carried out by the Canadian Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism.

Survey tests are, of course, not restricted to bilingual or a multilingual situation, but can be used in a country where only one language is current to measure the foreign-language compe-tence of a particular group or groups. For example, in Great Britain the government and private agencies may be interested in the ability of export company executives to speak and write French or in the oral French of secondary-school students. The results of such tests will be interpreted in many ways; in the latter case, the whole system of teaching French may be reassessed.

Research into the effectiveness of various teaching techniques, etc., makes use of language tests to show that one particular technique is more effective than another. Efforts are made to eliminate all factors that might affect the result: as far as possible,

the various classes used for the experiment are the same as regards age, ability, cultural and social background; the teachers do not greatly differ in the way they teach; even the places where the classes are held must be as similar as possible. At the end of a certain period of time, tests are administered to the students of the control classes, namely the classes where the particular technique was not used, and to the classes where it was used. It is thus hoped that the results of the tests will enable the researcher to assess the merits of the technique being tried out. The aim of an experiment may be to indicate that absolute beginners, in a course where only oral comprehension and oral expression are taught, advance more rapidly without the written version of what they are learning than those who always have the written word before them.

Psychological tests are concerned with the way a person acquires another language and with the way the learning of the new language affects his mother tongue and his personality. Certain recent methods, *Voix et Images de France*, for example, impose a heavy psychological stress on the learner by attempting from the very beginning, without recourse to the written form of the language, to make the learner think in the new language, to set up a completely new system of communication, completely separated from his mother tongue, in his mind. The tests will seek to establish whether this is, in fact, possible, or whether the learner consciously or unconsciously analyses the new language in terms of his own language. Personality covers a wide field; what can be involved is the extent to which the learner loses his feeling of belonging to his own language and/or national group.

Sociological tests cover more or less the same area as psychological tests, but at the level of the group rather than the individual. The whole question of contact and conflict between groups speaking different languages is examined.

Evaluation tests, which directly concern the teacher, subdivide into five main categories: aptitude, diagnosis, classification, prediction, and progress. They are, as their name indicates, concerned with measuring and evaluating the knowledge the learner has of the second or foreign language. This is, of course, exactly what survey tests do; but, in fact, there are several important differences: evaluation tests form an integral part of a teaching programme and their purpose is purely didactic within the compass of the programme. Survey tests do not exist within the framework of a group of courses given at one or more schools, etc.; they operate outside this framework and important, far-reaching policy decisions, normally at the government level, are based on the results of such tests: steps may be taken to revise the whole way French is taught in British schools, in view of the poor results in oral French. To sum up, evaluation tests in the above

example measure the performance of students in a given programme; survey tests evaluate the efficiency of programmes.

The first of the five categories of evaluation tests, aptitude, the object of which is to assess a person's capacity to learn another language, can be of great help to the teacher in giving him some idea of how far and how fast a certain student may progress and what kind of help he may need. A distinction must be made here between the general aptitude test described, and the limited aptitude test which deals with the student's capacity to learn a certain language. The latter test gives no indication of his aptitude at all, but simply identifies the kind of problems that the student will meet in learning that language.

Diagnostic tests have as their aim to make an overall assessment of the student's competence in the various areas of the spoken and written language, indicating his strong and weak points. At the end of an objective grammar test, in which the students in each question completed a sentence with one or more grammatical words, choosing them out of four possibilities, a list is drawn up, showing the number of students that chose each of the possible answers in each question. From this list it is possible for the teacher to identify what the students know and do not know and accordingly what to insist on in class. The following example taken from an objective grammar test administered to 287 first-year French Canadian students at Laval University will give some idea of this.

Question 30: 'Mary doesn't do very well at school.'
          'Yes, her mother should make her ———— harder.'
    (a) to work
    (b) works
    (c) work
    (d) working

77 students or 26 per cent chose (a)
28 students or 10 per cent chose (b)
106 students or 37 per cent chose (c)
74 students or 26 per cent chose (d)
2 students or 1 per cent made no choice.

Classification tests divide up students into various levels of language competence—usually beginning, intermediate, and advanced—for the purpose of forming homogeneous classes. To a limited extent, classification tests can be used as diagnostic tests; but not much reliance can be placed on the results, as the content of these tests is made up of a small selection of the items of a particular area of speaking and writing, and the very items chosen relate to a particular level of competence, be it beginning, intermediate, or advanced. Diagnositic tests do not relate to any particular level and attempt to cover the whole area of language

skills. If the area concerned is grammar and syntax, then the diagnostic test attempts to make an inventory as complete as possible of what the student knows and does not know of grammar and syntax.

Predictive tests are used to predict a student's handling of the second or foreign language in specific social and work conditions, where the second or foreign language is the only language used and where he must use that language to survive. A good example of this kind of test is the admission examination in English for foreign students at an English-speaking university, where obviously the language of instruction is English. The test selects a certain number of students who are thereby supposed to have the minimum competence in English required to begin their studies at the universtity. To some extent, the test is also a classification test, as it separates the students into various levels: at the first level are those who are admitted without restriction, being allowed to take the full academic programme; at the second level are those who can take a certain proportion of the programme while being obliged to attend classes in English as a second language; and at the last are those who have to spend a whole year taking English before they are admitted to the degree programme.

Progress tests, as their name indicates, are tests that measure the student's progress in a given programme. There are two kinds of progress tests, the overall progress test and the interim progress test. The former test measures the student's overall progress from the beginning to the end of the course; the latter deals with the extent to which a student has learnt the material of one or more lessons.

Once the purpose of the test has been clearly defined, the following stages in the drafting or choice of a test fall into place: level; type; selection; form; gradation; order; number of items; administration of test; correction; and validation.

After purpose, level is the most critical stage, since it determines the type of test, the selection of the language items to be included, and the form the test will take. Level is simply the amount of English the test assumes a student should know to meet the requirements of one or more situations. These two examples, admission tests for foreign students to an English-speaking university and progress tests in a given course, will illustrate what level means in practice.

In the first example, the level is defined in terms of the following situations: attendance at lectures and seminars; amount of reading required; number of written assignments. The level will be the amount of English required to function efficiently and adequately in those situations, due allowance being made for the time the foreign student needs to adjust himself to the situations

and to living in a new environment, whatever his knowledge of English may be. Ideally, students who pass the test should spend the summer at the university before the academic year begins, getting used to the new situations.

In the second example (progress tests) the level for the interim tests is the language content of the manual used in class, while the level for the overall tests is what the teacher and the director of the programme think a beginning, intermediate, and advanced student should know. In both tests the aim of the teacher and the administrator is to determine exactly how much the student has retained of his work in class, and how far he has advanced in his knowledge and use of English.

The type of test to be used is entirely dependent upon the level. For university admission tests, oral comprehension, oral expression, reading comprehension, composition, cover the language skills in which the foreign student must attain a certain competence in order to carry out his studies. In practice, only oral comprehension and reading comprehension tests are used, as it is extremely difficult to assess objectively, consistently, and rapidly a student's ability to speak and write. Nevertheless, experience in the use of just the two tests would seem to indicate that they offer a reasonable indication of how the student will turn out. As regards progress tests, the type of test will be determined by what is taught in class. If only the oral language is taught, then the tests will only be concerned with oral expression and comprehension. If reading is also taught, then, of course, there will be a test of reading comprehension and so forth.

Selection (namely, what to include in the test) is directly related to the level. In the case of university admission tests, there are, in fact, several stages of selection: the first matter to settle is whether to select material from the undergraduate or graduate levels; once it has been decided to base the selection on the first year at the university, the next question is to decide which lectures and seminars to record; then a list of vocabulary, grammar, and phonetic items is drawn up from the recordings; finally, a certain number of these items is selected for inclusion in the test. The process is not so lengthy with progress tests, where the selection for the test is made directly from the manual.

Form, when the type of test has been selected, is the particular form the test will take. With oral comprehension tests, there are two basic forms. The difference between the two is in the way the student gives his answer. In both he hears a statement on which he is asked to comment. In one he gives his answer orally, while in the other, after reading four comments on a certain statement he has just heard, he indicates which one he believes to be correct by writing an X against it. There are variants within this system for

oral comprehension tests, but the above distinction is broadly true. These variations are not as important as the different ways in which people use the test: sometimes it is more a vocabulary or grammar test than a test of the student's capacity to understand the meaning of a short conversation.

The order is the order in which the items that make up the test appear. This is no arbitrary affair and is dependent on the degree of difficulty of the various items. The problem of assessing the degree of difficulty of the items (gradation as it is often called) is not easy to solve, and yet the attempt has to be made, as a test which is too easy or too difficult for those who take it is obviously useless. The level must be clearly defined, and the items must be a fair measurement of the student's ability at that level.

Gradation is complex, as there are no simple, established, and reliable criteria on which to make the assessment of difficulty, as a large number of factors have to be considered, and as it is no easy matter to strike a harmonious balance between these factors.

The first factor is whether the content of the test is presented orally or in writing. It seems to be stating the obvious that the text of a question in a written test can be longer than a text in an oral test, but it is nonetheless important to clearly see why. In the oral comprehension test, the student hears each dialogue only once, and has to rely on his memory of what he has just heard to give his answer. In practice this means that in a reading comprehension test lasting 50 minutes, with five texts of between 180 and 250 words each, the student has ten minutes to read each text and to answer the five questions on each text, while in an oral comprehension test also lasting 50 minutes, with a hundred short dialogues made up of 10–60 words, the student has no more than ten seconds to consider his answer.

The next factor, length, follows naturally on the first. Here it is a matter of how many sentences there should be in each question; how many words there should be in each sentence; how many words, if any, there should be of more than two syllables; how long it will take the student to read or hear the question; and how much time he should be allowed to consider his answer. It may be decided in an oral comprehension classification test that the number of words per sentence would be the most effective and simplest way in distinguishing between the difficulty of each question, the other two variables, number of sentences per question and the number of words exceeding two syllables, being constant; always two sentences per question; no words more than two syllables.

The grammatical, lexical (phonetic as well in the case of an oral test), and socio-cultural factors are part of the next stage in assessing the degree of difficulty of the items to be included in the

test. The grammatical problem can be resolved to some extent by limiting the number of words per sentence. It is evident that the grammatical structure of a ten-word sentence cannot be very complex, whereas a thirty-word sentence would allow at least one main clause with a subordinate clause. The lexical or vocabulary difficulty of a word is determined by the extent to which it is used by the English-speaking community, by what sections of this community, and by the number and importance of the sections. The socio-cultural content of a word cannot be ignored, as the student cannot be expected to be familiar with the very special way an English-speaking group may use a word. Finally, lexical difficulty is also related to what the student needs to know and what the writer of the test, the head of the programme, and the teacher thinks he should know.

The following example may illustrate some of the factors involved in the difficulty assessment of an oral comprehension test:

Peter is in the living-room.
Peter was in the living-room.

From the point of view of length, both sentences, which contain less than ten words, are at the beginning level. As regards grammar, the sentences are identical in the order of the words, or syntax, but differ in the form of one word, the verb. This difference in form, which represents a change of time as regards the event described in the sentence, adds to the difficulty of the sentence, but both sentences may still be considered as belonging to the beginning level; and are used to distinguish between two kinds of beginners, those who know the simple past and those who do not. There is only one lexical problem, *living-room*, as the rest of the words, except for the proper noun, play a grammatical role. *Living-room* is chosen, rather than *drawing-room*, *sitting-room* and *lounge*, as it is a word of wide usage among most English-speaking groups; as it is neutral in its social content, while the others in England may denote a person's social class or age; as it is not limited to England, but is current in the U.S. and in Canada.

From this very brief view of the problems posed by gradation, it emerges that, except for length, it is extremely difficult to make any objective, scientifically based, quantitative assessment of the factors involved; but, difficult though this may be, some effort has to be made to evaluate the difficulty of the items to be put in the test, indicating the range of difficulty of the questions by giving them a number on the scale 0–10. The degree of difficulty can be usefully checked by a detailed examination of the students' answers in the test. It is immediately evident that if only 10 per cent or less of the students answer correctly a certain question,

then that question should be revised for being too difficult. Again, if only 20 cent cent of the students get half of the questions right, it is clear that the test is far too difficult, unless there is reason to believe that the students taking the test are nearly all very weak in English.

The problem of gradation is made all the more complex as there are no universally accepted criteria. The difficulty of the questions is defined in relation to the group of students whose language competence is measured by the test, and in relation to what the teacher, the director of the programme, and the ministry of education think the student should know. It therefore follows that, whenever the group or the programme changes, the scale of difficulty for a test will have to be completely revised.

It is not necessary to consider the subsequent stages in the making up of a second-language test, number of items, administration, correction, and validation, as the main points have already been made and these subsequent stages are best examined in the light of an actual test.

From the beginning of the article it has become increasingly apparent that there is no such thing as a universal test, which can be used to measure the second-language competence of any group of people. The tests outlined have been described from a purely operational point of view, namely, what they measure and who they measure. Tests are only useful for the group they were designed to measure. An admission test for foreign students, designed to see if they know enough English to undertake a full programme of courses at an English-speaking university, cannot be used to evaluate the level of English of secondary-school students in Pakistan. This, of course, does not mean that such a universal test is absolutely out of the question, but that what is involved is no simple matter. It means defining what is the level of language competence of the average native speaker of English, establishing in effect, a standard English which would be representative of the English spoken by the English-speaking communities throughout the world. Once that is done, which is no mean task, and which requires international agreement, it would be possible to have an all-purpose test, which, independent of group, teacher, programme, and country, would state that a particular individual in oral comprehension possessed 30 per cent of the skill of the average native speaker of English, a list being made of what he did and did not understand.

The absence of all-purpose tests and the lack of universally accepted criteria as to what a beginning, intermediate, and advanced student should know, should not prevent the teacher from making up his own tests and adapting existing ones to meet the needs of the particular classes he teaches. He does not need to

be a linguist, a statistician, or a computer programmer to know
what his class wants and how they are progressing. What he does
need are tests of all types, ranging from oral comprehension to
composition, to help him to make a rapid and sufficiently reliable
assessment of how much and how fast the students are assimilat-
ing what he is teaching them, and to identify precisely what points
they are having trouble with. The aim of this article has been to
describe the various tests that are available, to show how they can
be used, for whom they can be used and what purpose they can
serve; and to outline the basic procedure to follow in selecting,
adapting, and composing tests.

'Colourless Green Ideas': Multiple-Choice Vocabulary Tests

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IT IS BY NOW a popular sport to find a context for
Chomsky's famous sentence 'Colourless green ideas sleep furi-
ously'. His failure to compose a grammatically correct sentence
that will not be meaningful in any context prompts some reflec-
tions on multiple-choice test items, especially those claiming to
test vocabulary.

It is a curious irony that, at a time when a real attempt is being
made to contextualise language teaching, language testing should
be so artificial. Yet it is not exactly contextless, because obviously
it is impossible to produce contextless language. Its context is,
however, of a very special sort. A sentence in a battery of multiple-
choice test items has the test situation as its context. When a pupil
has acquired experience of a few tests, he begins to know what
to expect, and what is expected of him; he begins to learn what
sort of make-believe he must indulge in. Thus, a sentence in a
battery of test items has, as its context of situation, a great
number of extra-linguistic features, including the examiner's
intentions and the pupils' understanding of the intentions. The
technique of a good examinee is something uniquely appropriate
to the test situation. Nevertheless, in an English test, he is expected
to refer to his experience of the language, to make generalisations
from that experience, and sometimes to project himself imagina-
tively into a new experience.

Perhaps the most common such projection occurs when a candidate is confronted with a number of sentences unrelated to each other by linguistic context, sentences whose correctness he must judge. He must be expected to imagine a situation into which the sentence might fit. An imaginative candidate could find a context for any sentence that is not structurally defective. For instance, what is to be done with the following example?

The old lady watched with ————— as the man's head appeared over the window sill.
(chagrin   horror   delight   anticipation)

Clearly it depends on what sort of old ladies one knows! The examiner is, of course, relying on a 'normal' reaction; and, in this case, an informed candidate will understand the examiner's intention immediately. He is, however, at the mercy of the examiner's conception of normality, and, where cultural differences exist between the examiner and candidate, the validity of the test must be suspect.

It may be argued that the ability to recognise cultural differences is a perfectly valid measure of linguistic proficiency. Perhaps; but I suspect these tests, like so many others, test mainly the candidate's ability to pass the test.

The testers claim they can test such things as structure, vocabulary, sentence sequence, style, and comprehension by multiple-choice techniques. In view of the high degree of redundancy of English, it would seem that the more successfully an element is isolated for testing, the more artificial is the language of the test items. It has frequently been stated that one of the basic principles of testing is that one should test only one skill at a time. Presumably in language tests the aim is to isolate a possibly unfamiliar element in an otherwise familiar context. This is an admirable aim, but the context needs to be full enough to exclude the possibility of ambiguity. And making a context full enough to be unambiguous is the crux of the tester's problem. A language-user's choice of structure and vocabulary needs to be judged within the total context of his message, including, of course, the context of situation. Given an adequate understanding of how the language works, and a fair knowledge of the student, a teacher can assess the faults in a written assignment fairly objectively, which is not to say that overall grading can be done objectively— and even analyse the errors into categories. In order to do this, the reader has to make guesses about the writer's intended meaning. Nevertheless this can be done with a fair degree of certainty. On the other hand, the objective justice of multiple-choice tests is illusory, precisely because the full dimensions of context are missing. Moreover, analysis by classification of test

items tends to be dubious because distractions so often provide clues outside the category that the items purport to test. Thus many valid vocabulary test-items are valid only because they contain structural clues. A sentence like 'I accepted to go to town' will be rejected on grammatical grounds in favour of 'I agreed to go to town'. Again, sentence sequence tests, if they avoid abiguity, must contain structural clues like 'first', 'then' and 'after that'; the fact that these clues operate above sentence level does not make them any less structural.

In testing vocabulary, we have to decide whether it is active or passive vocabulary we wish to test, or, in Robert Lado's terms[1], production or recognition vocabulary. At elementary levels, recognition vocabulary is relatively easy to test. One can offer a word, followed by a number of possible synonyms, only one of which fits. Better, perhaps, one can offer a word that has to be matched with one of a number of pictures. It is difficult to say, though, what the tester discovers from such tests—where a synonym and distractors are offered, one is testing, to a degree that cannot be measured, knowledge of the distractors.

The less elementary the level, the more difficult it is to find plausible distractors, and the more dependent is the answer upon a full context. And a level is soon reached where the simpler techniques will not work, because no two words mean exactly the same thing in any given context. Testing for recognition of synonyms at, say, secondary-school level in Africa, one is in danger of fostering the common misunderstanding that synonyms are generally interchangeable. When the test is made more complex, by getting the candidates to fit a word chosen from a list into a sentence, the danger arises of structural clues appearing. Lado concedes[2] that distractors in a different word-class from the correct answer might make 'an extraneous clue'. He then offers the following item as one purged of this defect:

It might be dangerous to *run out of* fuel there.
   1. exhaust the   2. have liquor   3. go by auto.

But 'have liquor' can be excluded on grammatical grounds. It is worth noticing that this item illustrates another difficulty: '. . . exhaust the fuel' need not mean the same in British English as 'run out of fuel'.

Peter Strevens has devised some vocabulary tests which meet some of the objections above. He advises testers 'to seek a range of associations, rather than relying on a single one'[3]. Thus his

[1]Robert Lado, *Language Testing*, Ch. 13. London, Longmans, 1961.
[2]*Ibid.*, p. 193.
[3]*Papers in Language and Language Teaching*, p. 97. London, O.U.P., 1965.

tests are based upon lexical sets. Given the stimulus, 'furniture', the candidate must choose among 'smoke, tables, rabbit'. Here again it seems to me we have tests that are very useful at fairly elementary levels, but not above.

When it comes to testing production-vocabulary, however, the difficulties multiply. Where structural clues are offered, the tests are not reliable as vocabulary tests; and where context is inadequate, which is almost the case, the items become ambiguous and therefore invalid.

What one is therefore reduced to testing is semantic collocation. Likelihood of collocation determines the preference for 'timber' over 'tree' or 'wood' when the following word is 'industry', although 'tree industry' would be perfectly admissible, say, in a context dealing with the commercialisation of Christmas. The fact that some unusual collocations may, in certain contexts, be completely appropriate, seems to me to cast serious doubts on the validity of a great number of test items. If we take

The scientists engaged in learned ————
 1. gossip   2. conversation   3. chatter.

almost all native English speakers will recognise immediately that the most likely collocation is 'learned conversation'. However, it is just this likelihood that would make 'learned gossip' or 'learned chatter' exciting and meaningful phrases in certain situations. It may be observed in passing that anyone acquainted with scientists will recognise that 'learned gossip' is not a wildly improbable collocation. Unexpected collocation is a major stylistic device in well-used language. A volume of Dylan Thomas, opened at random, yielded 'colour of saying', 'capsized field', and 'reservoir park' immediately, That this example is far-fetched is irrelevant; the collocations are triumphantly appropriate in their contexts. And here it is worth pointing out that it is not only second-language learners who are made to endure these tests; multiple-choice techniques are being used increasingly in first-language testing. Do the techniques not inhibit creative experiment? Indeed, dealing with any learners of English whatever, when testers are reduced to measuring the likelihood of semantic collocability, are they doing any better than those who once thrashed into school-children clichés like 'the ———— of marching feet'?

If we could devise completely sound, economical, multiple-choice vocabulary tests, what, in any case, would we have achieved? Is it a very significant statement to say of a student 'His vocabulary is weak/strong'?

Measuring Language Problems and Attainment

MALCOLM D. COOPER

A TEACHER OF LANGUAGE often laments that he has no definite yardstick by which to assess the problems and attainment of his pupils and the relevance and success of his own teaching methods. The type of test I give an example of precedes and follows a controlled programme of integrated grammar and composition teaching in the first year of a Tanzanian secondary school. All the grammar has actually been taught before, but analysis shows that the selected items can be very shaky. To assume competence in handling them would be to build on shaky foundations, as well as to give the optimistic teacher some depressing shocks.

A test like the one below is most relevant if someone has made a programme based upon a knowledge of the language structures the pupils are going to need.

The test consists of a simple 'story'. Part one tests the pupils' ability to *recognise* the correct sentences of the story. Part two tests their ability to *produce* the correct structures in a skeleton form of the story. Most of the tense or grammatical signals are still there for them to respond to if they can (e.g. *than* for the comparative). Training pupils to recognise and respond to such signals will be an important part of the teacher's work.

Trial testing proves the obvious: that if pupils cannot recognise the correct structure they are most unlikely to be able to produce it. It also shows those who can recognise (or make a good guess!) but cannot produce the structure. In one or two cases pupils may produce but fail to recognise. This may be due to the strong temptation of one of the distractors, or to limitations in part two of the test. Whatever the case the problem is still likely to be there.

Given at the beginning of the course, such a test will help the teacher to measure the attainment of the class and the extent of each problem, and to work out the methods and time he will need to solve each one. He will, from his detailed results sheet, be able to assess individual pupils' needs as well. Given at the end of the course, the same or a similar test will offer invaluable evidence. Are the class and individual results better? Which elements still create problems? Where were the teaching methods most and least successful?

An analysis of these particular problems reveals inevitably the common stumbling-blocks: mother-tongue interference, new

structural features in the target language (e.g. articles) and perhaps most important, conceptual differences. The little word *too* contains an idea which is very difficult to grasp. I have demonstrated it in sentences 24 and 25. The structure may, indeed, be learnt, but the concept is often not. This is a different matter from the use of the *will* tense with *if* where the meaning is clear to the user although the tense structure is wrong. Conceptual difficulties are also often at the root of irregularities with articles, tenses, and clauses with *although, more . . . than, so . . . that,* and *if.* Analysing the results of a test like this should show up the conceptual problems more clearly and re-emphasise that in teaching, understanding must precede any other activity.

A further by-product of a test like this is that new teachers of English, presented with it, can very quickly learn what they have got to do and can anticipate the problems. Then it is just a matter of how to do it!

Re-emphasising that all these language points have been taught in the primary school, here are some of the results from the test given to secondary school entrants, after five years of English in Swahili-medium primary schools.

Question	Percentage error in recognition	Percentage error in production
4	66	90
10	10	88
11	50	88
24	50	50
25	70	76

Finally, a word of warning. It is not intended that tests like the multiple-choice one outlined should become a regular feature of a course. There are two basic dangers: first, ungrammatical distractors can induce errors and, therefore, actually retard developing grammatical competence; secondly, the teacher may use his creative energies in training his pupils to do more and more sophisticated tests instead of helping them to acquire and use the grammar of the target language. As an initial diagnostic and an end-of-session attainment guide, however, such tests may help the teacher to help his pupils more effectively.

Diagnostic Test for First-Year Tenses and Structures in the Scheme of Work

Instructions. Choose the letter of the correct answer and write the number of the question and the letter you have chosen on the paper provided. The correct sentences tell a simple story. You have 25 minutes for this test, so you must work quite fast.

1. (a) I have the friend called Mr Ogola.
   (b) I have a friend called Mr Ogola.
   (c) I have friend called Mr Ogola.

2. (a) He is hardworking man.
   (b) He is the hardworking man.
   (c) He is a hardworking man.
3. (a) He lives next door to the President of our Farmers' Co-operative Society.
   (b) He lives next door to a President of our Farmers' Co-operative Society.
   (c) He lives next door to President of our Farmers' Co-operative Society.
4. (a) This morning he went to his shamba, it was very early.
   (b) This morning he went to his shamba. It was very early.
   (c) It was very early this morning, he went to his shamba.
5. (a) He always goes early because it is cool, therefore he doesn't get too tired.
   (b) He always goes early. Because it is cool and therefore he doesn't get too tired.
   (c) He always goes early because it is cool. Therefore he doesn't get too tired.
6. (a) Did he worked very hard in his shamba this morning?
   (b) Did he work very hard in his shamba this morning?
   (c) Was he worked very hard in his shamba this morning?
7. (a) Yes, he was working very hard.
   (b) Yes, he has worked very hard.
   (c) Yes, he worked very hard.
8. (a) When I went to see him, he has weeded his cassava.
   (b) When I went to see him, he weeded his cassava.
   (c) When I went to see him, he was weeding his cassava.
9. (a) He greeted me and said, 'I have been here since 6 a.m.'
   (b) He greeted me and said, 'I was here since 6 a.m.'
   (c) He greeted me and said, 'I am here since 6 a.m.'
10. (a) 'It is now 10 a.m. I did not have any food for four hours.'
    (b) 'It is now 10 a.m. I have not had any food since four hours.'
    (c) 'It is now 10 a.m. I have not had any food for four hours.'
11. (a) When he weeded another row, he had a rest.
    (b) When he has weeded another row, he had a rest.
    (c) When he had weeded another row, he had a rest.
12. (a) He suddenly remembered that he had left his cigarettes at home.
    (b) He suddenly remembered that he has left his cigarettes at home.
    (c) He suddenly remembered that he left his cigarettes at home.
13. (a) He has a smoke with me every time I am coming to see him.
    (b) He has a smoke with me every time I came to see him.
    (c) He has a smoke with me every time I come to see him.
14. (a) I do go and help him in the shamba sometimes.
    (b) I go and help him in the shamba sometimes.
    (c) I go and helping him in the shamba sometimes.
15. (a) He is sometimes helping me.
    (b) He sometimes help me.
    (c) He sometimes helps me.
16. (a) He used to be a lazy man, but now he is very helpful.
    (b) He used to being a lazy man, but now he is very helpful.
    (c) He was used to be a lazy man, but now he is very helpful.
17. (a) Having no cigarettes, he said that, 'I would like a cigarette'.
    (b) Having no cigarettes, he said I would like a cigarette.
    (c) Having no cigarettes, he said, 'I would like a cigarette'.
18. (a) I gave him one from the packet I had just bought.
    (b) I gave him one from the packet I had just bought it.
    (c) I gave him one from the packet which I had just bought it.
19. (a) Just then we saw Mr Wambura, his shamba is ready for planting.

(b) Just then we saw Mr Wambura whose shamba is ready for planting.

(c) Just then we saw Mr Wambura whom his shamba is ready for planting.

20. (a) He is the man from whom Mr Ogola got his land.
    (b) He is the man whom Mr Ogola got his land from him.
    (c) He is the man from whom Mr Ogola got his land from.

21. (a) He also gives us a help sometimes.
    (b) He also gives us some help sometimes.
    (c) He also gives us some helps sometimes.

22. (a) But he is so busy to help us often.
    (b) But he is very busy that he can't help us often.
    (c) But he is so busy that he can't help us often.

23. (a) He keeps cattle in order to get milk and meat.
    (b) He keeps cattle in order that to get milk and meat.
    (c) He keeps cattle as to get milk and meat.

24. (a) He is very wise that he keeps too many cows.
    (b) He is too wise to keep too many cows.
    (c) He is too wise that he keeps too many cows.

25. (a) So he has so many cows.
    (b) So he hasn't got too many cows.
    (c) So he has too many cows.

26. (a) Although he has many cows, he is wealthy.
    (b) Although he has many cows, he is not wealthy.
    (c) Although he has many cows, but he is not wealthy.

27. (a) Last week he sold a cow so that he can buy a coat yesterday.
    (b) Last week he sold a cow so that he could buy a coat yesterday.
    (c) Last week he sold a cow so that he could be able to buy a coat yesterday.

28. (a) All his cows are healthier.
    (b) All his cows are health.
    (c) All his cows are healthy.

29. (a) He is lucky because his land is very fertile than mine.
    (b) He is lucky because his land is much fertile than mine.
    (c) He is lucky because his land is more fertile than mine.

30. (a) Last year he got the biggest maize harvest I have ever seen.
    (b) Last year he got a biggest maize harvest I have every seen.
    (c) Last year he got the very big maize harvest I have ever seen.

31. (a) If we will use cow manure we will also get a good crop.
    (b) If we would use cow manure we will also get a good crop.
    (c) If we use cow manure we will also get a good crop.

32. (a) Unfortunately we have no any cattle.
    (b) Unfortunately we have not a cattle.
    (c) Unfortunately we have no cattle.

33. (a) But we know what to do, isn't it?
    (b) But we know what to do, don't we?
    (c) But we know what to do, is it?

Diagnostic Reproduction Test for the Story

Instructions. (1) You must put the verbs or words in brackets into their correct tenses and forms. If they do not need changing, do not change them.

(2) Fill in the gaps with the word or words or punctuation necessary to make complete sentences. If you think the gaps do not need a word, do not put one.

(3) Put the correct punctuation (commas or full stops) in the squares if necessary and put capital letters where necessary.

My Farming Friends

I have ——— friend called Mr Ogola. (2) He is ——— hardworking man. (3) He lives next door to ——— in our village.

(4) This morning he went to the shamba   it was very early. (5) He always goes early   because it is cool   therefore he doesn't get too tired. (6) ——— he (work) very hard in his shamba this morning? (7) Yes, he (work) very hard indeed.

(8) When I went to see him, he (weed) his cassava. (9) He greeted me and said, 'I (be) here ——— 6 a.m. It is now 10 o'clock. (10) I ——— not (have) any food ——— four hours.' (11) When he (weed) another row he had a rest. (2) Then he suddenly remembered that he (leave) his cigarettes at home. (13) He has a talk and a smoke with me every time I (come) to see him. (14) I (go) and help him in his shamba sometimes. (15) He ——— sometimes (help) me. (16) He (used) to ——— a lazy man, but now he is very helpful.

(17) Having no cigarettes, he said ——— would like a cigarette.' (18) I gave him one from the packet ——— I had just bought ———. (19) Just then we saw Mr Wambura ——— shamba is ready for planting. (20) He is the man ——— Mr Ogola got his land ———. (21) He also gives us ——— help sometimes. (22) But he is ——— busy that ——— help us often. (23) He keeps cattle ——— to get milk and meat. (24) He is ——— wise to keep too many cows. (25) So he has ——— cows. (26) Although he has a lot of cows ——— wealthy. (27) Last week he sold a cow so that he ——— buy the coat yesterday. (28) All his cows are health ———. (29) He is lucky because his land is ——— fertile than mine. (3) Last year he got ——— (big) maize harvest I have ever seen.

Mr Ogola and I know that if we (use) cow manure we will also get a good harvest. (32) Unfortunately we ——— any cattle. (33) But we know what to do, ———?

A Note on Contrastive Analysis

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AN OVERALL CONTRAST of phonological and grammatical systems may not be able to predict and specify   among other things   the multiple substitutions—their nature and conditioning factors—in one language for a given single pattern of another language[1].

In this short note a conflicting phonological point between English and Persian is illustrated and once more the predictive

[1]This approach is characterised by an attempt to make direct contrasts between phonological and grammatical systems of two languages, to predict the errors the speaker of one language will make in the process of learning another language, and perhaps to classify the errors according to their types. See Charles C. Fries, *Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language*, p. 9. (Ann Arbor, 1945.)

weaknesses of such an approach in this particular case are brought into focus[1].

The following observations have been made with regard to the pronunciation of English initial double-consonant clusters by native speakers of Persian, bearing in mind that Modern Persian does not permit any initial consonant clusters:

1. Substitution of Persian /Ci-y/ for English /Cy/. Example: 'cute' tends to be rendered as /kiyut/ $[k^h_y iju.t^h]$[2]. Clusters involved are: py, by, ty, dy, čy, ǰy, ky, gy, fy, vy, θy, sy, hy, my, and ny.

2. Substitution of Persian /Cu-w/ for English /Cw/. Example: 'queen' tends to be rendered as /kuwin/ $[k^h uwi.n]$. Clusters involved are: pw, bw, tw, dw, kw, gw, θw, sw, šw, and hw.

3. Substitution of Persian /šer/ for English /šr/. Example: 'shrink' tends to be rendered as /šerink/ $[\int eři.\eta k^h_y]$. Cluster involved is: šr.

4. Substitution of Persian /ʔes-C/ for English /sC/. Example: 'school' tends to be rendered as /ʔeskul/ $[{,}esk^h u.l]$. Clusters involved are: sp, st, sk, sf, sm, sn, and sl.

5. Substitution of Persian /ʔeš-C/ for English /šC/. Example: 'Schmidt' tends to be rendered as /ʔešmit/ $[{,}e\int mi.t^h]$. Clusters involved are: šp, št, šk, šm, šn, and šl[3].

6. Substitution of Persian /Ce-C/ for English /CC/. Example: 'clap' tends to be rendered as /kelæp/ $[k^h_y elæ{>}.p^h]$. Clusters involved are: pl, pr, bl, br, tr, dr, kl, kr, gl, gr, fl, fr, vl, vr, and θr.

The above observations can be summarised as follows:

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[1]The approach has been criticised by some scholars for not being adequate to predict and account for all the potential errors and difficulties—their types and their nature. Its claimed pedagogical implications are also questioned and challenged by foreign-language teachers. See R. Wardhaugh, 'Three Approaches to Contrastive Phonological Analysis', *The Canadian Journal of Linguistics*, 13-1, p, 3 (Fall, 1967); and S. P. Corder, 'The Significance of Learners' Errors', *IRAL*, 5, p. 162 (1967).

[2]Sloping brackets, / /, enclose phonemic transcriptions. The phonemic rendering of English examples is supposed to reflect the Persian phonemic system. The system used in this article is that of Jazayery and Paper's, as it appears in *A Reference Grammar of Modern Persian* (Ann Arbor, 1961).

Square brackets, [ ], enclose phonetic transcriptions. The transcriptions used here are based on IPA and Trager-Smith systems with some modifications, i.e. /-/ = syllable division, $[C^h]$ = aspirated consonants, $[C_y]$ = palatalised consonants, [ř] a flap turbulent, [ˌ] = a glottal stricture, and [V>] a retracted vowel. The IPA symbol for /y/ is [j]. C and V are cover symbols for consonants and vowels respectively.

[3]Most of these clusters are borrowed into English.

English	Substitution Pattern in Persian
$\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{Stops}\\\text{Non-sibilant fricatives}\\\text{Voiceless sibilants}\end{array}\right\} + /w/$	$C_1V\text{-}C_2*$
$\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{Stops}\\\text{Non-sibilant fricatives}\\\text{Nasals}\\/s/\end{array}\right\} + /y/$	$C_1V\text{-}C_2$
$\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{Stops}\\\text{Non-sibilant fricatives}\end{array}\right\} + \left\{\begin{array}{l}/l/\\/r/\end{array}\right\}$	$C_1V\text{-}C_2$
$/\check{s}/ + /r/$	$C_1V\text{-}C_2$
$/s/ + \left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{Stops}\\\text{Non-sibilant fricatives}\\\text{Nasals}\\/l/\end{array}\right\}$	$?VC_1\text{-}C_2$
$/\check{s}/ + \left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{Stops}\\\text{Nasals}\\/l/\end{array}\right\}$	$?VC_1\text{-}C_2$

The following rules, therefore, can be stated with regard to the patterns of substitutions:

1. English initial C_1C_2 tends to be rendered as Persian $C_1V\text{-}C_2$, if C_2 is $/y/$, $/w/$, or $/r/$.

2. English initial C_1C_2 tends to be rendered as Persian $?VC_1\text{-}C_2$, if C_1 is $/s/$ or $/\check{s}/$ and C_2 is not $/y/$, $/w/$, or $/r/$.

3. English initial C_1C_2 tends to be rendered as Persian $C_1V\text{-}C_2$, if C_1 is not $/s/$ or $/\check{s}/$ and C_2 is not $/y/$, $/w/$, or $/r/$†.

4. V is $/u/$ if C_2 is $/w/$; $/i/$ if C_2 is $/y/$ and $/e/$ otherwise.

Systematic comparison of English and Persian phonotactics, no matter how detailed the descriptions are, will not result in the above-observed generalisations‡.

Knowing the syllable structure of Persian as CV(C)(C), one would be tempted to postulate: (1) a potential difficulty and (2) two different possible substitution patterns—i.e. $C_1V\text{-}C_2$ and

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*C_1 stands for the first member of the initial double-consonant cluster in English, and C_2 for the second.

†An explanation needs to be found to account for the two different substitution patterns of Persian for a single pattern of English initial double-consonant clusters. Carleton Hodge, of Indiana University, holds the view that it could have a historical explanation. Jeris Strain, of the University of Hiroshima, Japan, thinks, however, that the phenomenon could be attributed to the functional load of Persian syllable types (Personal communications).

‡This does not mean, however, that a generative analysis would not result in similar conclusions.

$?VC_1\text{-}C_2$. The comparison can not specify (1) the selection of one of the two or both possible patterns of substitution, (2) the conditioning factors if the two patterns are selected and (3) the morphophonemic processes determining the nature of the inserted vowels.

Brokenly with their English Tongue . . .

The Writing Programme in the Contemporary English Course, University of Hong Kong

AMELIA SUN, MIMI CHAN, and
HELEN KWOK

WE SHOULD LIKE to begin by quoting from one of our student publications: 'Here is a Chinese in western clothes. He is so silent. He cannot speak well in English. He does not speak well in Chinese. Is there nothing to say? Or is it because he cannot say anything in an interesting way? Perhaps it is simply because he has not got over the bar of language difficulty.' To understand why many Hong Kong students cannot express themselves well in either English or Chinese one must examine briefly the educational system in the colony. About 98 per cent of the four million inhabitants of Hong Kong are Chinese[1]. A large proportion of the student population attend what are known as Anglo-Chinese schools in which English is used as the medium of instruction, while Chinese is studied as an academic subject[2]. The English Department of the University of Hong Kong offers a course of studies called Contemporary English. In addition to their study of the language, the students are encouraged to read

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[1] *Hong Kong, Report for the Year 1967*, Hong Kong Government Press, 1968: 'The total estimated population of the Colony at the end of 1967 was 3,877,700. About 98 per cent could be described as Chinese on the basis of language and place of origin.'

[2] *Ibid.* The 204 Anglo-Chinese grammar day schools have 135,784 pupils. They offer a five-year course in the usual academic subjects leading to the Hong Kong English School Certificate examination. The 116 Chinese middle day schools accommodate 48,707 pupils and offer a five-year course in the usual academic subjects leading to the Hong Kong Chinese School Certificate examination.

English contemporary works. On the practical side they are expected to improve their actual use of the language, in both its spoken and written forms.

With the exception of a few Indian, Portuguese, or Eurasian students, all our Contemporary English students so far have been Chinese. To find out the relative importance of their native language (L.1) and the acquired language (L.2), in their lives, we asked our second- and third-year Contemporary English students (classes of '68 and '69) to fill in a questionnaire. From their answers we learn that although they sometimes speak English to their friends, the great majority of them do not ever use it at home, or use it very rarely. Some claimed they use a mixture of English and Chinese, while others maintained that they find it easier to use Chinese in ordinary conversation, but they have to resort to English in discussions of an argumentative or academic nature.

When it comes to expressing themselves in writing, most of our students find it easier to use English. For example, of the fifty or so students, only two said they carry on their correspondence in Chinese. All the others claimed they either write exclusively in English, or write in Chinese only to their parents or other people who do not understand English. This is not too surprising, as all through their secondary school days they have had much more practice in writing in English than in Chinese. But because English is after all a language learnt in the environment of the school, and is not often used in his daily life, one cannot expect the average student to have a complete mastery of it. In using it he will make mistakes, sometimes caused by the 'interference' of the native language. In the words of another student, they are 'too westernised to write good Chinese and too Chinese to write English with native gusto'. The language barrier is, of course, not insurmountable. And although the standard varies from student to student, the best among our students have a good enough mastery of English to be able to write creatively in it.

The writing programme of the Contemporary English course allows the students to practise the use of English for practical purposes such as the writing of reports, interviews, speeches and so on. They also try their hand at creative writing, composing short stories, character sketches, one-act plays and the like. For the more practical use of the language, a good mastery may be sufficient. But to write good imaginative prose, competence in the use of the language is not enough. Even assuming they possess creative ability Chinese students writing in English still face a number of problems in addition to the linguistic one. The literature they read as part of their course work is contemporary English literature. Some of them read in

addition English literature from the eighteenth century onwards. Most of them have little acquaintance with Chinese literary traditions. About half of those who replied to our questionnaire say they do not read Chinese literary works at all. Many others read them only very rarely. Hong Kong is in many ways a westernised city, but it still possesses its own mixture of east and west. It cannot be denied that to many of our students much of the life described in the books they read is far removed from their own experience. The Chinese student writing in English has to decide whether he should reproduce situations and characters similar to the ones he meets in the reading, or whether he should describe the life with which he is more familiar. We know only too well how easily the customs, habits, and attitudes of a people can appear to be eccentricities to other nations. The writer about life in Hong Kong has the difficult task of making his story believable. There is also the problem of dialogue. Should the characters speak a kind of English which suggests the Chinese language? How should the different dialects and registers of Chinese speech be translated into English? These are some of the difficulties which our students encounter in their attempt to write creative prose in the medium of English. To discover these difficulties and to see whether their writing possesses a quality which marks it as distinctively Hong Kong, we set a paper for our second-year students (numbering thirty in all). They were asked to write on one of the following topics:

1. Dialogue from a domestic comedy
2. The last scene of a television drama
3. A description of natural scenery which opens a novel
4. The first chapter of a mystery novel
5. The most unforgettable character I have ever met
6. A street incident
7. A topic of your own choice

Our comments below are based chiefly on their performance in the test.

Halliday, MacIntosh, and Strevens have distinguished between bilingualism and ambilingualism in their book, *The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching*[1]. Their analysis is pertinent to our discussion: through force of circumstances our students feel they have to attain a certain level of bilingualism, but few indeed achieve any real degree of ambilingualism. Difficulties with grammar—problems with verb tenses, prepositions, dangling participles, syntax and articles—are inevitable among writers using a second language. We do not presume to undertake a

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[1]M. A. K. Halliday, A. MacIntosh, and P. Strevens, *The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching*, p. 79. London, 1964.

systematic survey of the mistakes made in our sample—such an undertaking would be outside the scope of this study. We shall instead concentrate on those lapses in grammar or lexis which we believe to arise out of the patterns and characteristics of Chinese—the results of either direct translation or the confusion of the features of L.1 with those of L.2.

Needless to say, performance varies from student to student, the level of attainment ranging from near perfect to very poor indeed. The commonest mistakes from our sample have to do with verb tenses. This may be partly because tense as a grammatical category does not exist in Chinese, though there does exist an elaborate aspectual system. Examples of past tenses being used for present or past perfect, and vice versa, are rife. The misuse of articles is also common, possibly because, in spite of the complicated, and, to foreigners, puzzling system of classifiers in Cantonese, the *definite—indefinite—no article* complex is absent.

A characteristic of the English taught in Hong Kong secondary schools is the emphasis on so-called 'idioms'—not in the wider sense but in the narrower sense of semi-proverbial expressions, aphorisms, set phrases. These are learnt, together with their explanations, and reproduced in tests and examinations. Cantonese also has a variety of such 'set expressions' 成語, and every fluent Cantonese speaker possesses and makes use of a considerable repertoire. Many Chinese students of English come to the conclusion that it is the use of 'idioms' which is the mark of the fluent speaker of English. Our sample reveals the frequent and often erroneous use of such 'idioms' which make the language stilted and 'foreign'. One student, for example, on the subject of a stoical aunt's fortitude when confronted with her husband's infidelity, writes, 'She went about her daily duties without a word of complaint. She only told us to keep it a secret because it was a skeleton in the cupboard.' Another speaks of those who have never heard of the Vietnam war as people with their 'heads on the clouds'. Expressions like the 'fairer sex' and 'better halves' seem contrived in the midst of formal, or sometimes ungrammatical, constructions. The 'idiomatic' expression itself may be hardly recognisable: 'took me on my guide' in the sentence— 'Mr Smith's thundering voice never took me on my guide, but Margaret's voice was always able to capture my attention'—is evidently a corrupt version of 'took me off my guard'; and confusion of the literal with the figurative is shown in the description of a meeting in church: 'Suddenly, somebody saw eye-to-eye with me.'

From a study of our students' work over a number of years, and from discussions on usage, there is every evidence that they are usually not aware of any incongruity when they mix styles

and registers. In two attempts at writing the first chapter of a mystery novel, we find, in spite of carefully-worked-out language patterns, elaborate sentence constructions, and a generally inflated style, the intrusion of phrases like 'quite a lot', 'a lot of', 'the kid' (for child). This rather grotesque mixing of styles is especially evident in the reproduction of dialogue, certainly one of the greatest sources of difficulty even to fairly competent students. Dialogue presents few, if any, problems when they choose a Chinese setting and Chinese characters. The rather formal artificial patterns appear to come fairly easily to them. Whether the effect is to be commended or not is another matter. From western literature we can draw the parallel of Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, in which he tries to write a kind of English which suggests the Spanish language. Our students either deliberately or unconsciously write dialogue which suggests the Chinese language. And, from Chinese characters, sentences like:

They are attracted by the materialistic side of the the world

and

They will never let me go. They will never let me alone. I want to live in peace, poor as I am. I don't care! But the devils, they, they won't let me go.

sound not altogether unnatural, considering it is an artificial medium they are using.

But once the students abandon the milieu with which they are familiar and substitute settings and characters that they know only superficially from books and films, the majority run into difficulties. It would indeed be hard to imagine two American pilots speaking in the following manner—an odd conglomeration of what the writer imagines to be racy, devil-may-care slang, unidiomatic usage, pompous diction, and plain ungrammaticality:

'Could you think of something else instead of combing your hair? We cannot go on like this, you know. I wish I were home again with my fair lady!' said Joe.

'To hell with you! Could you discard this and stop talking about woman for a while. You are good for nothing except fooling around with young ladies and getting involved in these petty and trivial struggles,' replied Ted.

From a woman whom we suppose to be an English landlady, we have this 'slangy' outburst: 'What's happened to the whole lot of those cops?'—followed immediately by the pretentious question 'Can't they do something to mend our society?' The dialogue from a scene of a situation comedy enacted by very 'mod' westernised characters is less stilted and 'hybrid', but basic lapses of grammar detract from any sense of authenticity—'This female logics beats me', and 'stop boasting your male ego'.

The failure to put across the desired effect in dialogue, as in narrative and exposition, can be partly attributed in some cases to an imperfect knowledge of English vocabulary and 'idiom' in the wider sense of usage. 'Terms' that are 'correct', but not 'right' give a distinct 'foreign' flavour—which is not always without a charm of its own. 'Winnie could no longer stand the smell of *spirit* from her husband since she had never liked any *alcoholic drinks* in her life.' Winnie, the heroine has a 'tenor voice' (in Cantonese 女高音 'female high voice', 男高音 'male high voice'); her husband unidiomatically 'began to put weight on the accelerator'; three rescued pilots celebrate with 'a cup of champagne'; (杯 'cup' is the generic term in Cantonese for receptacles for liquids).

To achieve authenticity in characterisation, some students make use of very English names—Finch, Alex, Jean, Mr Redford, Aunt Sally, Aunt Phyllis. They put in what they consider to be very English settings, such as an afternoon tea-gathering. Not only this, they even attempt to assume what they think to be an English point of view and to use the proper expression. For instance in the following first impression of Aunt Sally, we find:

> I realise that the small agile figure before me was a woman mellowed, not made egoistic or strident, by much experience, a lot of failures, and a little success.

And even when Aunt Sally is made to speak, we notice this conscious choice of expressions and references, as in:

> Shyness is a gift rather than an affliction. A boy or girl who is not shy at twenty will be a bore at forty[1].

In the attempt to achieve an ideal character, the writer may even have been influenced by the quality of 'a kind of reverent openness before life' so much discussed in present-day assessment of the English novel. This we find in a passage with which this particular sketch ends:

> She found enjoyment out of everything—from a six-in-the-morning cigarette to a post-pendial [sic] cup of champagne, from a bird's song to a Strauss waltz, from an infant's cry to an old man's smile, from a spring flower to an autumn bare branch of a tree—so intensely that the world and she seemed to fuse together into one.

Still keeping to this trend of an attempt at the portrayal of a European, if not English, character, this time in a mysterious setting, we have the following illustration:

> Aunt Phyllis, the elder one, never left the château, being allergic to sunlight, which caused her dizziness. When

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[1] Cf. Harold Nicolson, 'A Defence of Shyness'.

exposed to the sun, she was at her weakest and would look so pale and deathly that you would believe she was indeed fading away. But back in the dim old building she was as active as a bat in its cave. She had peering dark eyes, often driving you to speaking the truth when they were fixed tight on you and her mouth was a small rounded thing slightly pouted at the tip. She looked like an owl when she looked down at you from her bedroom wearing her brown dressing-gown. I had never liked her, for she seemed to be watching me all the time, searching out the little secrets I hid in my heart.

We notice the writer's use of animal imagery and that she has some skill in achieving effects through her description which is, in part, reminiscent of Dickens's portrayal of Miss Havisham. Another extract from the same piece offers an interesting analysis:

Aunt Robert should be Aunt Roberta, but she demanded Robert, and Robert she had always been called. You cannot say she is a woman, for she was dressed like a man; she behaved like a man and she even kept a valet. But I liked her better than Aunt Phyllis, because she seldom spied on me, only snapped at me once in a while, and was out most of the day.

If we are looking for possible sources of influence, we could perhaps start off with George Sand. But considering the writer's nationality, we cannot exclude the presence of the Chinese opera, where female impersonation of the male and vice versa is an accepted, much exploited convention. By way of contrast to these, we would like to bring in some Chinese sketches. First we have Auntie Wong, a kind of matriarchal figure, aloof and severe, whose one object in life is to preserve the good name of the family and to 'save face' regardless of the cost, be it half-rations on non-visitors' days in contrast to sumptuous feasts on other occasions or keeping up a bold front in the face of the elopement of an erring, spendthrift husband. Auntie Wong is described thus:

She always reminded me of a chilly wintry night when I have forgotten to close the window . . . She was the most impassive, cold and calculating person.

A contrast to Auntie Wong in terms of personality, outlook, and social status is Ah Ping, a 'capable and efficient' nanny, 'a friend and companion' to her charge from whose point of view the study is made. What makes this study interesting is that it is of a local character in a local setting, but seen from a westernised point of view.

Ah Ping is described as a beautiful young woman with 'jet-

black heavy pig-tails reach[ing] low down her back' and 'eyes round and shiny as liche-nuts . . . [Her] face was oval, with the healthy flush of the outdoor life.' But Ah Ping, in spite of her beauty, and a nature 'gay and delicate as the apple-blossom . . . was a hunchback'. This made her the despair of village match-makers:

> After all, they could guarantee beauty of face and even promise the goodness of soul, but how could they promise strong healthy sons, or even daughters? A wife who could not bear sons was a well with no water or a bank with no money, in short, useless . . . [One must have descendants] to tend [one's] tablet.

This history of Ah Ping is narrated in the form of stories which Ah Ping told her little mistress. From the few passages quoted we can see that the whole piece is sprinkled with phrases and images distinctly Chinese but carrying a western flavour, as indicated in the frequent and perhaps conscious use of Chinese proverbial sayings. The works of writers like Pearl S. Buck and Emily Hahn may be considered as possible influences. We are also reminded of the problems which confront such writers. As one of our students remarked in an article written for the English Society term publication *Greenfields*:

> The habits, facts, and complications of a non-European nation, no matter how westernised it considers itself, are bound to appear as eccentricities in the eyes of Europeans. The solution is either to leave the complications out, as Pearl S. Buck does, or to add quotation marks round every suspicious phrase, like Lin Yu-tang, or to let them jar on the nerves of the readers, as in the case of E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India*.

The Ah Ping passage abounds in allusions to Chinese super-stitions and customs, and habits of country life. Other students also fall back on regional prejudice to create character and setting. One makes the following remarks:

> Uncle Cheung's mother did not like her (daughter-in-law) because she was so dark and lazy and could not talk Cantonese.

In this one remark the student touches upon qualities which an old-fashioned Chinese mother-in-law would require in her daughter, namely, purity of race, industry, and knowledge-ability in matters of customs and traditions.

The writer of the Ah Ping story, already referred to, intensifies the plight of her heroine all the more by a few lines which indicate the atmosphere in which she grew up:

In her village sick unmarried daughters were carried out to the 'dying house' to die, since dying in her father's house would bring ill fortune to her brothers and their descendants for three generations to come.

These are all distinctly local settings evoked through allusions to customs, traditions, prejudice, and resentment of a particular place. A wide divergence, however, is noticeable in our students' range of allusions. One specimen, 'The Man with a Golden Voice', was written as a parody of spy films, thrillers, and comic strips, in the course of which the writer manages to blend some local colour into a western setting. It also shows strong hints of the influence of sophisticated magazines such as *Playboy*. The hero of the piece is one Juda Bond, son of James Bond and Mata Hari, who is described in the following terms:

His spectacles were able to transmit infra-red rays, as well as project ten minute rockets, each one as powerful as a hand grenade, by the movements of the jaw. Each button on his shirt could blow up a building. And there were two powerful jet propellers at the heels of his shoes which enable him to jump a hundred feet above ground.

A contrast to this piece is the following specimen which shows some similarity in technique in the range of details observed and alluded to, but put together to achieve a completely different effect. In this piece the portrait is that of a hippy:

A pair of sandals, levis, a rag and a flower . . . He digs music and his music is jazz, the blues, the soul, the hot jazz, the cool jazz. He digs that beat. The beat gives him a sense of order . . . Marijuana is his Muse. He seeks her constantly. She can lead him to a level of reality which the trivialities of his life often hide from him and she can plunge him into a level of concentration in which the mind is purged of all trivialities of daily life. He is the one who sees reality, not shadows. He sees beyond the glamorous tweeds of the rich, the moralistic sheep-skin of the squares, the glorious armour of the politician and the self-deceiving shield of the deceiving priests. The social lie, the religious lie. They all bring ruins. But against the ruins of the world, he would try to create in writing, in painting, in dancing, and in making music, a more meaningful world of his own.

In this passage, we find someone searching for a meaning to existence. The quest is by no means rare. We come across it again and again in reading through specimens. For instance, one writer questions her identity in relation to place:

Yes, I was born here [Hong Kong] and brought up here, but

can I call this my home and my native land? This is the
question I often ask myself, but unfortunately I am not very
sure about the answer. I never feel a sense of belonging,
especially after the recent May riots. Is Hong Kong really a
'Borrowed Place' surviving through 'Borrowed Time' as
Richard Hughes puts it? I tell myself that I can easily go away.
I am a British citizen as I've got a British passport, but is
Britain going to live up to its word after this Immigration
Bill concerning the Kenyans? This is just as uncertain as the
future of Hong Kong because everything depends on the
actions and reactions of the many powers of the world.

Another writer protests against the unquestioning filial
obedience encouraged in the traditional Chinese family saying
that to submit, unquestioningly, is:

. . . to surrender my personality, to give up my life for myself
and let my parents live it for me . . . Now, like Mauritius
or Rhodesia, I have grown, I have tried to exist on my own
and have not failed; while they, poor Great Britain, have
degenerated into little Britain. While I have shot from
Enid Blyton to Shakespeare and Joyce, they still remain
unchanged, one poring over the family budget, the other
killing time reading 'Samurai' novels.

These two passages reflect an awareness of time, place, and the
relation of self to the world. Another writer, showing the same
awareness, attempts a nonchalant and even cynical attitude.
Here the setting is deliberately vague:

Was it in Nagasaki?
Was it in Hiroshima?
But then it might have been in Paris.
Or it could have been in Berlin.
Who knows? The place is not important, anyway.

And she goes on:

Are these the people Noah took on his boat to build a future
world with? A better world? A brighter world? But Noah
must have made a mistake. He has chosen the wrong people.

But cynicism can also come through a much more clearly
delineated setting—a local setting, narrow and confined. Referring
to the three hundred square feet each family is allowed in a
resettlement tenement, one writer says that 'flat' would be 'quite
an inadequate term for it'. Then he meets a postman whom he
despises for possessing the 'vice' of 'being without ambition',
but the postman gives the following reason for his choice of a
job:

> Nobody envies your job and nobody wants your job, so you
> are provided with a sense of security.

From these few lines one has the impression of congested living conditions, and ruthless competition in the struggle for a livelihood.

The specimens we examined showed a good variety of subject matter, approaches, treatments, and above all, of sources of influence. A tentative conclusion could be that at this stage personal experience, that is, familiarity, is a richer, more reliable source of inspiration than experience derived second-hand from various sources. We also noticed that, in most cases, this experience is successfully conveyed through techniques acquired from reading various established and current writers. Flashbacks and streams of consciousness are often attempted and to good effect. Nevertheless, we feel that success is ultimately dependent on the writer's mastery of the language, and the writing programme of the Contemporary English course aims primarily at helping the student to achieve an acceptable level of proficiency in the use of the language.

Reflections After a Visit to Japan

A. S. HORNBY

FOR SIX WEEKS last autumn (1969) I was in Japan, where I had lived from 1924 until 1941. I had taught at various schools and universities and had worked with H. E. Palmer. In 1956 I returned to Japan for a conference of ELT specialists. This enabled me to learn about post-war developments and your readers may be interested to learn about them.

So I was aware, before my last visit, that there has been, since the war, a strong American influence on language teaching in Japan. Japan's well-known cultural receptivity was bound to include the work of the American linguists.

My former Japanese colleagues and their younger successors gave me a warm welcome. There were seminars at which I was asked for my views on recent developments in Europe, the U.S.A., and Japan. I was pressed to give my views on the value of language laboratories and the rest of the electronic equipment so widely used in Japan today (providing a joyous bonanza for the flourish-

ing electronics industry). I was pressed to give my views on transformational-generative grammar.

Japan has, since the Meiji period, constantly tried to be fully abreast of, even ahead, of the West. The universities of Japan still have this wish to be in touch with what is new. Today, instead of poets, it is linguists who are invited to Japan, and many of the best-known language experts of the U.S. have visited Japan. Their work is discussed in the numerous periodicals devoted to ELT. Structural linguistics and transformational grammar have much that is helpful. The help will be greater when we can take what we need and decide what can be used in the classroom. In this field our British linguists and language-teaching specialists are already making contributions of immediate value.

Two sentences so often quoted from Chomsky were produced for me to comment on: *John is easy to please. John is eager to please.* Why is the transformation 'To please John is easy' acceptable, and the transformation 'To please John is eager' unacceptable? (*Acceptable* and *unacceptable* have now replaced *right* and *wrong, grammatical* and *ungrammatical*; they are satisfactory if qualified by *to the educated native speaker*.)

I was fortunate in being able to 'save face' (important in the East) on this occasion, because this pair of sentences is so often quoted that it can have escaped the notice of few of us. Many American linguists, following the lead of Floomfield, have suggested that meaning does not need much attention when analysis and structure are being examined. Fries, at the Tokyo conference of 1956, would quote from Lewis Carroll:

> Twas brillig and the slithy toves
>   Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
> All mimsy were the borogroves,
>   And the mome raths outgrabe.

He wrote on the board his own specimens[1]: *Woggles ugged diggles. Uggs woggled diggs. A diggled woggle ugged a woggled diggle.* These were evidence, he said, of our ability to recognise classes of words from their positions in a frame of reference. They suggest that lexical meaning is not essential and that structural signals may be recognised independently. It has been suggested that a language may be taught by concentrating upon the functions (or structural) words and the sentence patterns, with a minimum of content words (real or even nonsense words) to complete the frames.

This would be dull for any learner. It would not do for small children (pupils 'at the pre-puberty stage', as my American

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[1] From his *The Structure of English*, 1952.

colleagues in Tokyo put it). In company with most European linguists today, I cannot feel satisfied that analysis and teaching procedures which relegates meaning to the background can get us far.

The necessity to form associations has long been recognised. The learner of English must associate the succession of sounds (and later the succession of letters) of a word or phrase with what that word or phrase stands for. Palmer used the word *fusion* for the final result—the fusion of the symbol and the referent (or *symbolendum*, as Palmer preferred). We learn to associate successions of words with certain patterns, and this is where we may return to the pair of sentences presented to me at the Tokyo symposium.

Associations are not limited to sounds and patterns. *This boy is my nephew* is grammatical and acceptable. *This boy is my grandfather* is grammatical but not acceptable. Pleasing people—this is associated with the concepts of ease, difficulty, possibility, or likelihood. These are innate concepts, independent of language. We have tacit unformulated awareness as well as explicit knowledge. So pleasing people is linked, for the native speaker of English, with such words as *easy*, *difficult*, or *impossible*. We all have emotions, states of mind, moods. We have feelings of fear or anxiety, states of being willing, ready, happy, or reluctant. So a person may be *afraid*, *anxious*, *ready*, *eager*, *happy* or *reluctant* to do something, go somewhere, and so on.

The refusal to accept 'To please John is eager' is not a question of grammar. We do not need a language teacher to tell us that 'To please John is anxious (afraid, eager, reluctant, etc.)' is nonsense. In fifty years' experience of language teaching I have never known a learner to produce such sentences as 'To please John is eager'.

Jespersen dealt with these adjectives early in this century in his *Analytic Syntax* and *Modern English Grammar*, and in my *Guide to Patterns and Usage* I acknowledged my debt to him. It is enough to recognise certain adjectives as belonging to a class which we may label according to their semantic content. I was able to point out that old ideas in language learning are always being 're-discovered'.

My Japanese colleagues questioned me about the value of a contrastive analysis of two languages. Many research workers have probably obtained their doctorates by making such an analysis. If the language is an uncharted one (perhaps that of an Indian tribe in the jungles of the Amazon), the analysis may have great value. If it is of a language which has been taught for years, as English has been taught in Japan since the Meiji era, its value is not so certain. Of the many thousands of differences (in

phonology, morphology, accidence, syntax, semantics) between English and Japanese, only a small percentage is likely to give trouble. Do we need to know the thousands that give no trouble? A complete list would not have helped me when I arrived in Japan in 1924. It would have been daunting. A list of 'common errors' would have been useful. I was given no such list, but within a few months I had compiled my own. Teachers need to know the errors and confusions which actually occur. They need not worry about those which do not occur.

Pattern practice, made popular by Fries, has been in favour in Japan during recent years, but has been found dull in the classroom. My questioners at the seminars last year were familiar with the work done by Palmer and me on patterns. I was asked to say something about the differences between my own patterns (as set out in my *Guide to Patterns and Usage* and the *Advanced Learner's Dictionary*) and Palmer's patterns (as set out in his *Grammar of English Words*). Palmer, I told them, was interested chiefly in word order, so he placed in the same pattern (his No. 15) all those verbs which may be followed by a *to*-infinitive: *He wanted* (*happened, decided, came*) *to see me*. I separated the transitive verbs (*He wanted to go*, my VP2) from the intransitive verbs (*I happened to see him*: *He came to see me*; *We stopped to have a rest*, my VP25). I was asked why I had done this. My answer was that conversion to questions involves *what* with transitive verbs: *What* does he want (intend, like, etc.) to do? For intransitive verbs questions with *what* alone are not always possible: They stopped to have a rest. *Why* did they stop? (or) *What* did they stop *for*?

'So you were aware of transformational grammar in the 1930s' was the flattering comment on this answer. I was, of course, quite unfamiliar with this name at that time. We used *convert*. We provided exercises in which learners converted one type of sentence to another.

I am not now satisfied that conversion exercises (or transformations as they are now being called) are useful as a way of learning patterns. They may be helpful, at a later stage ('during maturation', as that American colleague put it) for consolidation. The introductory stage should, I now think, be linked closely with the situation—first with classroom activity, then with activity at one remove, through visual aids (blackboard sketches, textbook illustrations, wall charts, projected pictures or films) and later with situational activity in textbook stories[1].

The use of sentence patterns set out in frames (each sentence

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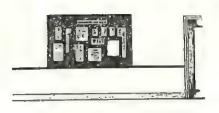
[1]Such activity procedures are described in my *Teaching of Structural Words and Sentence Patterns* and in my contribution *Teaching Practice* in *Teachers of English as a Second Language*, edited by G. E. Perren. C.U.P., 1968.

presenting a different situation), or, better, in a substitution table (so that the situation may be stable) can follow the situational activity. The first stage should be one of learning, not studying. I have always preferred to use *learner*, not *student*. We may study a language after we have learnt it. Too many teachers lecture about a language instead of helping children to learn it.

One of the many obstacles to successful language learning in Japan (and in many other countries) is the preoccupation of teachers with grammar. *Grammar*, says the Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology, is linked with *glamour*, and my Japanese friends would find it easy to confuse the two words in speech. The form *gramarye*, now obsolete, meant 'occult learning'. Perhaps grammar has too much glamour for too many of us. Teachers need to be familiar with the grammar (the right kind of grammar) of the language. They need not pass on this knowledge to their pupils in the early stages. But it is easier to lecture than to teach by the methods we favour today. It is easy to take the line of least resistance.

Newsboard

1. **The Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (ATEFL)** will hold its **Fourth Annual Conference** from Wednesday 30 December 1970 (morning) to Saturday 2 January 1971 (afternoon) at the London Overseas Students Centre of the British Council, 11 Portland Place, London W.1. The theme is to be 'Children and Adults'. Speakers will include L. G. Alexander, A. Baird, J. A. Bright, C. Candlin, A. V. P. Elliott, A. H. King, L. Kelly (Canada), P. Robinson (Canada), H. C. Trivedi (India), S. H. O. Tomori (Nigeria), D. H. Spencer, H. J. S. Taylor, H. P. Williams, and many others.

Conference registration forms are available now from: ATEFL, 16 Alexandra Gardens, Hounslow, Middlesex, England. Particulars of the Association are obtainable from the same address. (Important: Please enclose stamps or international postal reply coupons. Applicants living abroad should ensure that these are sufficient to cover the cost of air-mail delivery.)

2. The University of Hawaii announces 'the Pacific Conference on Contrastive Linguistics and Language Universals (PCCLLU), to be held in Honolulu, Hawaii, 11-16

January 1971. The PCCLLU will be a series of symposia/colloquia with a two-fold purpose: (a) to facilitate an exchange between the East and West on theories and problems in the field, and (b) to attempt to resolve some issues which have reached or will soon reach a crisis point. In order to provide deeper discussion of these issues, a symposium format will be followed allowing more flexibility for the participants and avoiding as much polemic as possible. The conference will be based on the Asian and Pacific area languages, and will focus on three types of questions: (1) theoretical questions dealing with such areas as the validity and the basis (linguistic and psychological) of contrastive linguistics, the nature and role of language universals, and so on; (2) methodological questions concerning practical problems encountered in the performance of a contrastive analysis; (3) questions on applying the results or output of a contrastive analysis to applied linguistic concerns. Each section will be introduced by a plenary speaker: (1) Charles Fillmore of Ohio State University, (2) Akira Ota of Tokyo University of Education, and (3) John DeFrancis of the University of Hawaii. Anyone interested in more information about the PCCLLU or in participating in it should write to: Steering Committee of the PCCLLU, Dept. of ESL, Moore Hall 570, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822.'

Readers' Letters

1. R. W. Rutherford writes from York: Some people may have been wondering recently what has happened to the Child Language Survey, originally attached to the Nuffield French Project in Leeds in 1965. The Survey is, in fact, still in existence, but is now supported largely by a grant from CRDML (Committee for Research and Development in Modern Languages) and is housed at York University, together with the Schools Council Modern Languages Project (formerly the Nuffield Project). The Schools Council's main financial contribution to the Survey is the salary of the organiser, Mr R. W. Rutherford; the remaining expenses of the Survey, including the salaries of the two research fellows, Mrs M. E. A. Freeth and Miss E. S. Mercer, are paid for by the CRDML grant.

The Survey, from 1964 and until 1967, was concerned with the language of children aged between 8 and 12 years, which was the age-range the Project's foreign language teams were dealing with. Now it is concerned with the 13-16 age-group to coincide with the age-group of the continuation phase of the Project's work. The first phase of the Survey was carried out initially by Dr Ruqaiya Hasan. Responsibility for *computer analysis* of the earlier materials rests with Mr R. J. Handscombe, now working in

Canada. The materials used for transcription and analysis are the Survey's own tape-recordings of children's conversations made in English schools and homes. The major work of the Survey is to collect, transcribe, and publish in limited editions these conversations (and also some written materials). Publication of Phase One transcripts was completed in May last year. The Survey's brief is to look at the topics children talk about and the lexical and syntactical resources revealed.

The CREDIF organisation at St. Cloud agreed to set up a similar survey, and transcripts of the conversations of French children produced by Janine Leclerq at the CREDIF Child Language Survey are published by the Survey in order to make these materials more widely available to interested persons in this country.

An analysis of the topics of conversation in the Survey's transcribed conversations of English 15-year-old children has been completed and is now being published. It serves both as a comment on children's topics of conversation and as a guide to the published transcripts, in that stretches of language where children talk about a particular topic can be located. A paper on the topics of conversation in the speech of younger children is also available.

The order of priorities for the earlier phase of the Survey is now reversed, giving emphasis in the following order to: collection, transcription and publication of data; analysis of topic popularity; limited syntactic and lexical analysis. A questionnaire on analysis priorities revealed that the Survey should: attempt to describe such verbal syntactic patterning as questioning, requesting, etc. (obviously this is a collection of tasks from which a selection will be made); continue topic analysis; carry out word and tense/aspect counts; look into adolescent attitudes revealed in the transcripts. The approach is no longer via a total grammar, attempt-

ing to analyse the whole language, but rather looks at parts of the language within the reach of the Survey's manpower.

In the foreign languages the Survey's staff have arranged for the collection of recordings of the speech of 15-year-old children in France, Germany, and Spain. Each collection will be relatively small and will make up a single volume of transcripts for each of the three languages. Some simple analysis will be done on these transcripts with the help of postgraduates working with the Survey during summer vacations. The priorities for work on the foreign languages revealed by the questionnaire showed that word and tense counts were thought most useful for materials writers working for French, followed by some analysis of verbal activities. For German, syntax of verbal activities was rated top priority, followed by tense counts, then a count of sentence types. This order of priorities was also given for Spanish and Russian.

For more details and a catalogue of the Survey's publications, write to: Child Language Survey, 86 Micklegate, York YO1 1JZ.

2. Professor I. A. Richards writes from Cambridge, Massachusetts: In the article 'The Teaching of English in the Schools of Israel', there occurs on page 278 a paragraph which requires comment. The experiment there misdescribed with such evident prejudice has been continuing not 'for the past four or five years' but since 1961. An official with Mr Gefen's responsibilities should get at least that sort of fact right. The 'severe' criticism he refers to has been fully refuted in my *Design for Escape*, Harcourt, 1968, on pages 89-90. The critic, who was appealed to by Mr Gefen, is there convicted of discreditable ignorance. He has not, however, yet withdrawn his misstatements and apologised. The content of the course is not Basic English; it goes at a suitable stage well outside the Basic limits. It does,

for pedagogic reasons, start out by using the key operators of Basic. These reasons have been fully expounded in my *Basic English and Its Uses*, 1945, and in the above-mentioned paperback, *Design for Escape*. Mr Gefen (along with, I fear, 'many, if not most, linguists and teachers') has not, however, thought fit to take note of these expositions. He alleges 'absence of grammatical grading' and 'pedagogical unreliability of its choice of situations'.

Those who have worked with the course in classrooms know what nonsense this is. Mr Gefen omits mention of the continuous devoted attachment of the teachers to the course. And he omits reference to the published experimental evidence of the decisive superiority in results it attains. A summary of the evaluation can be found on pages 130-5 of *Design for Escape*. Those who look these references up will not be surprised to note further that Mr Gefen also fails to allude to the audio-visual resources of this course. As a committee selected by him has said in its conclusion: 'It should be said in favour of the Harvard materials that the number of sophisticated audio-visual techniques placed at the teacher's disposal do ensure that the learner is given good models for pronunciation and plenty of practice at repeating the same structures in different contexts.'

In view of the paragraph in his article preceding that under comment this omission is striking.

3. L. A. Hill writes: In her article *The Duality of Collective Nouns* (*E.L.T.*, XXIV, 2) Marianne Celce says: 'The choice of singular or plural number seems to depend on the speaker's or the writer's point of view; it is not a completely random choice. If he conceives of *the class* as a whole group or unit, the choice or number will probably be singular. If he thinks more in terms of the individuals that make up the group, the choice will very likely be plural. *The fact that one has this choice*

signals the presence of a collective noun.' In a footnote she adds: 'It has come to my attention that Talmy Givón made the suggestion that collectivity might imply two senses, one a singular sense, the other a collective sense.'

I do not know who Talmy Givón is (or was), but, unless he put his view forward before 1913, he was beaten to the post by Jespersen. In Part 2 of the latter's *Modern English Grammar*, first published in that year, Jespersen makes exactly the point that Marianne Celce makes in the passage I have quoted above (see paras. 4.813 and 4.814 in the *Modern English Grammar*). He gives *family* and *clergy* as examples.

I would not agree with Marianne Celce that adjectivally-derived generic nouns with human reference are collective. In present-day English they are always treated as plurals: the example Marianne Celce quotes ('Let the wicked forsake his way') would not, to my mind, be acceptable in present-day English.

4. D. A. Hogarth writes from Sierra Leone: I would like to make one observation on P. H. Breitenstein's interesting article on the uses of *have* (*E.L.T.*, XXIV, 2, 1970).

To say that *have to* is used to fill the gaps left by the defective auxiliary *must* may suggest that *must*, where possible, always has the same meaning as *have to*. In fact, *must* seems only to be synonymous with *have to* where it describes rather than confers obligations (e.g. Army standing orders would not say *Soldiers have to keep their uniform clean*. They would almost certainly say *Soldiers must*, etc. However, an old (but unpromoted) soldier might well tell a recruit, *Soldiers have to keep their uniform clean*.

For *had to* to supplant *must* for most past uses is possible only because you cannot give orders in the past.

I was interested also by No. 5 in the Question Box (*E.L.T.*, October 1969)—Why did Aldous Huxley

write *all the four thousand* and not *all four thousand* in the first sentence of 'Brave New World': *The hands of all the four thousand electric clocks in all the Bloomsbury Centre's four thousand rooms marked twenty-seven minutes past two*?

S.P.'s answer—that *the* is redundant but that Huxley 'intended to emphasise the fact that the Bloomsbury Centre has no fewer than four thousand rooms, that every single room had its own electric clock, and that all four thousand clocks were perfectly synchronised' seems to me to attribute significance to what is, in fact, a point of style. Surely *all the* is used here so that *all the four thousand clocks* can balance *all the Bloomsbury Centre's four thousand rooms* where *the* is essential.

5. Mr D. Walatara writes from Ceylon: I read with interest the cautious review of C. J. Dodson's book *Language Teaching and the Bilingual Method* (Pitman, 1967) in the January (1969) issue of *E.L.T.* The reviewer makes certain assumptions about language teaching which Dodson tries to dislodge and which, in the experience of many teachers of English who are not expatriates in these parts, act as obstacles to the evolution of a successful methodology and need dislodging.

Some of us have used the bilingual method in remote Ceylon. It was called the reconstruction technique, for it used the mother-tongue printed version for 'glancing superficially at' (and not reading) while simultaneously a set passage of English was being constructed and re-constructed by pupils in the class, orally (about twice over) and then in writing. The difference between reading and 'glancing superficially at' was, in the experience of some of us, that the latter involved study, while the former was only a kind of reference to the mother-tongue equivalent to *understand* the English (meaning-conveying). For example, there was no reading aloud of the mother-tongue passage, or any re-

lated activity which makes reading a fuller study than 'glancing at'.

We discovered that if a set of mother-tongue equivalents was available in print the pupils learnt even the use of the article (which does not exist as such in Sinhala) and the English tenses much faster than they ever did through the use of pictures, mime and situations. But whatever one calls it one must remember that it is not the equation of word with word.

In your reviewer's example he asks 'does not "blue cap" lead pupils into the mistake "bleue casquette"?' It may, but it is just that sort of mistake that the bilingual method looks forward to, for the mistake helps to clear up this notion once and for all, and thereafter the pupil knows that in like situations it should always be 'une casquette bleue' and not 'bleue casquette'. The subconscious tendency to draw parallels from the mother tongue is brought to the surface and *corrected*, and thereafter the mistake does not occur. The direct method does not face up to this subconscious inclination and these errors of translation and idiom continue throughout the learner's career. In our experience no amount of ignoring of the mother tongue and use of the direct method prevented mother-tongue interference.

The assumption your reviewer makes, and, of course, together with him, many highly-respected language teachers, are: (1) that 'translation is harmful', (2) that no two languages are alike, (3) that we may find no word corresponds to 'is' in, say, African languages, (4) that a bilingual technique 'will not work' in places like Asia and Africa.

As your reviewer quite rightly says, there is too much superficial work and sheer 'belief' on which much foreign-language teaching is based. Similarly these postulates of his are very much a matter of sheer conjecture and semantics! For whether translation is harmful depends on what we *mean* by translation. Mr

Dodson does not call what he does 'translation', nor did we. Perhaps two languages are never alike, but our experience shows that this is not relevant to the problem, for as Chapman states, and Catford implies in some of his writings, every language seeks to say the same thing, though in different ways. The situations are alike, though the ways different languages use to verbalise them differ. As for equations for 'is' and 'the', we come back to the question whether in our bilingual techniques we are looking for such equations. We do not use *translation* and it is translation that requires such equations. Of course Mr Dodson's methods work quite well in Ceylon, so that there is our experience as against your reviewer's assumption of the difficulties a bilingual technique may meet with in Asia.

Our expatriate teachers are a handful. But we have several of our own teachers who like expatriates have only an acquaintance with the mother tongue. As the mother tongue was used only to convey meaning, and for use only by the pupil for this purpose, it was hardly a problem for such teachers. This is where the significance of Mr Dodson's intention that pupils should 'glance at' and not 'read' the mother-tongue passage is apparent. Even if the teacher hardly knew the mother tongue, and even if classes were made of more than one mother-tongue group, it did not matter so long as the set passage of English being 'reconstructed' was the same for all.

The mother-tongue equivalents are given out in either mother tongue of the group, if it is a mixture of two mother-tongue groups (which it rarely is in Ceylon). As far as the English teacher is concerned, he concentrates only on the English. The equivalents in the mother-tongue printed versions are those that have been worked out beforehand for pupils by those who know both English and the mother tongue. Our problem was not the expatriate teacher, or the teacher who knows a little of the mother tongue, but the expatriate adviser, for he felt that he would not be able to advise any more! This fear of his was, of course, unfounded, for the most wonderfully encouraging thing about the bilingual approach that was tried out was that the bilingual element in the approach 'withered away', after about eight months of use of the technique. The approach was a 'self-destructive' one, to use Mr Dodson's own words. Mr Dodson emphasises this point in his book. I was sorry that your reviewer failed to mention it at all.

Question Box

1. The last sentence of a recent article in *E.L.T.*, XXII, 137 ends with a reference to 'loaded questions, check-up drills of all sorts, and all the other well-known techniques presently in use'. Isn't this a misuse of *presently*? Obviously the author means *at present*. Here in Bombay I have always made a clear distinction in my teaching between these two important expressions of time.

ANSWER. You have done well to make this distinction, and there is no reason why you should not continue to do so in future, because it is a distinction still valid in British English.

In American English, however, *presently* keeps its old meaning 'now, at present, currently'. This was its meaning in Shakespeare's day. 'Presently?' asks Ariel (in *The Tempest* IV i 43). 'Ay,' answers Prospero, 'with a twink'. This meaning still survives in parts of Scotland and it was taken to North America by both Scots and Englishmen in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Under the influence of press and television it has quite recently (since 1950 perhaps) come back to England and it has somehow found its way into that article, written in Turkey by Mr Alan C. Harris, which you mention.   [S.P.]

2. Why do we talk of sending a person to Coventry when we decide to have nothing more to do with him? Why to Coventry, and not to some other town?

ANSWER. During the Civil War of 1642 to 1645 between King Charles the First and Oliver Cromwell many of the king's loyal subjects were put in Coventry gaol and were thus cut off from all social intercourse with their friends. 'To send a man to Coventry' meant to consign him to a notorious prison. The phrase lived on in colloquial speech long after the Civil War, and it then took on a more general meaning, 'to ostracise a person, to have nothing further to do with him on account of some misconduct, to ignore socially'.

As a colloquial expression containing the name of a well-known town, 'sending to Coventry' may be compared with 'Go to Halifax (Hull, Bath, Jericho, Putney)!' which is a polite way of saying 'Go to hell!', or, as the Americans say, 'Get lost!'

See the latest editions of Ebenezer Cobham Brewer's *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* and Eric Partridge's *Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English*.   [S.P.]

3. Is it in order to write *today*, *tomorrow*, and *tonight* without hyphens? And what about *Year Book*?

ANSWER. Yes, it is now customary to write and print these three frequently used adverbs of time without hyphens, although you will find them printed *to-day*, *to-morrow* and *to-night* in both the corrected reissue of *The Oxford English Dictionary* (1933) and *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (1944).

It is now fashionable to use as few hyphens as possible, but they are still required in such nominal phrases as *will-o'-the-wisp*, *Jack-in-the-box*, *stick-in-the-mud*, *go-between*, *ne'er-do-well*, and *happy-go-lucky*.

As for *Year Book*, this too is quite acceptable. You find it in the title of that well-known reference book *The International Year Book and Statesmen's Who's Who*. On the other hand, you will find no hyphen (and no introductory definite article)

in the title of UNO's annual publication which is called *Yearbook of the United Nations*. There are, in fact, three ways of printing this compound word:

(a) *open* year book
(b) *hyphened* year-book
(c) *solid* yearbook

Clearly the solid form (c) is the neatest, and this will surely be the most used in future. [S.P.]

4. Is it better to say *Mr Sims' typist* (mistə simz taipist) or Mr Sims's typist (mistə simziz taipist)? I hear and read both forms here in the Middle East. For instance, in a recent issue of the journal *Time* I found in one place a reference to 'St Louis' soaring Gateway Arch' and elsewhere I read something about 'St Louis's cheap labor'.

ANSWER. *Mr Sims's typist* is certainly better, but, as we shall see in a moment, *St Louis* is a special case.

Mr Sims's typist is now the accepted form, in accordance with the principle that genitive and plural inflexions are pronounced /ız/ after a sibilant: *one horse, two horses; straight from the horse's mouth* /hɔːsiz mauθ/; *Dickens's novels, Keats's poems.*

St Louis presents a slight problem because, as you know, this city—the birthplace of T. S. Eliot—was founded by the French. Missouri passed over to the United States with the completion of the Louisiana purchase in 1803. Everyone in England and most people in North America keep to the French pronunciation and say /luːiː/ without thinking, but more and more young people in the United States now use the so-called spelling pronunciation /luːis/. Your first writer in *Time* probably says /snt luːiz/ in the genitive, but your second one evidently prefers the more recent spelling pronunciation /snt luːisiz/. [S.P.]

5. Is there any difference in meaning between the two auxiliaries in the sentences 'I wish John *wouldn't* smoke so' and 'I wish John *didn't* smoke so'?

ANSWER. Yes, there is certainly a slight difference. You can see it clearly if you rewrite these two sentences in their fuller forms, something like this: (a) 'John will smoke for hours and hours, and I do so wish he wouldn't.' Here *will* expresses habit or custom. John will smoke = is wont to smoke (now a little old-fashioned), is accustomed to smoke, is in the habit of smoking. *Wouldn't* is the old past subjunctive in a dependent clause. Compare 'I wish you wouldn't interrupt' (Hornby's Verb Pattern 11A, Table No. 24, in *A Guide to Patterns and Usage in English*, p. 41).
(b) 'John does smoke for hours and hours, and I do so wish he didn't.' Here *does* is the emphatic auxiliary used by the speaker to lay stress upon the plain fact. Again, *didn't* is the old past subjunctive in a dependent clause.

Your question is a very interesting one indeed. It is the kind of question a teacher might get from a brilliant pupil. It is the best answered by giving simply expanded transformational rewrites, and not by reciting complicated grammatical rules.
[S.P.]

6. Would you please explain the difference in meaning between *a week tomorrow* and *tomorrow week*?

ANSWER. There is no difference at all. These two expressions merely show stylistic variation. They both mean 'eight days hence' or 'one week counting from tomorrow'. We never say 'tomorrow in eight days' like the French ('demain en huit') and the Germans ('morgen in acht Tagen').
[S.P.]

7. When speaking of *a(n)* and *the* can one say simply *articles*, or must one always refer to them as *the articles*?

ANSWER. You should always refer to them as *the articles*, although indeed there are only two of them. It is

perhaps worth remembering that *articulus* 'little joint' was first used by Latin grammarians to translate Greek *arthron*, which included defining adjectives or determiners. (Greek had only a definite article, and Latin had no articles at all.) It would be a good thing, it seems to me, to give up this term altogether, to call *a(n)* and *the* determiners (which also include demonstratives and possessive adjectives) and to make determiners a separate word-class or part of speech. If we do the same for cardinal numerals, we then have ten word-classes instead of the traditional eight. [S.P.]

8. The following advertisements appeared recently in the *Radio Times*: (1) 'Did *you* know most modern cars run perfectly happily on 3-star petrol? Snag is a lot of big companies don't make one. Shell do.' (2) 'You're in for a disappointment. Some of the big names don't offer a comprehensive range of octanes. B.P. does.' Why is Shell plural and B.P. singular?

ANSWER. There is indeed no reason at all why Shell and B.P. should not be treated in the same way: both singular or both plural.

Shell is short for Shell Oil Company, so named by Marcus Samuel (1853–1927), later Lord Bearsted, tenth child of a poor Jewish dealer in the East End of London who made a living by selling ornamental seashells. When Marcus rose from such lowly surroundings to become the founder of one of the world's largest oil companies, he recalled to mind all those gay seashells which he had seen in his father's shop as a child and he called the new company plain *Shell*.

B.P. stands for *British Petroleum Company*. It was this company that made history on 21 September 1965 by striking oil in the North Sea.

You might argue that B.P. is more like one unit than Shell because it is a national company with one chairman and one board of directors, whereas Shell is an international company with many branches over-

seas, especially in the Middle East, but I do not think that such an argument is really convincing. The fact is that these two advertisements were composed by two different persons. Without thinking much about it, the Shell man chose a plural verb and the B.P. man preferred a singular one.

This is a good question, since we are here concerned with an increasingly important linguistic *register* in the modern world—the language of advertising. See Geoffrey Leech's new book (in Longmans' English Language Series) *English in Advertising: A Linguistic Study of Advertising in Great Britain*. [S.P.]

9. I am not sure that I know how to form, and how to pronounce the ending of, the plural and the possessive of French proper names such as: (a) *L'Enfant, Marat, Gounod, Renault;* (b) *Delaroche, Delavigne, Boileau, Brontë;* (c) *Lesseps, Dreyfus, Saint-Saëns;* (d) *Dumas, Dubois, Giraudoux, Desvaux, Jacques, Descartes, Charles* ($\int$ a : l), *Chautemps, Desbarres, Desmoulins, de Villars.*

Some of these names have incorporated a French article, so their plural will have two articles. Please comment on the use of *the* in such cases.

ANSWER. There is always much uncertainty about the pronunciation of proper names in any language, and particularly of those based on a foreign language, such as the French names in this inquiry. (N.B. *Brontë* is not really French, being thought to be an affected spelling of the Irish family name Brunty.)

Categories (a) and (b) are straightforward, it being normal to add 's for the possessive, s for the plural, in all cases, and to pronounce this either s or z or iz according to the phonological rules for forming plurals in English, namely: s after voiceless consonants other than s $\int$ and t$\int$, z after vowels and voiced consonants other than z ʒ and dʒ, and iz after s z $\int$ ʒ t$\int$ dʒ. So *Delaroche* in (b) is different from the other names

quoted, since it ends in ʃ—in an anglicised pronunciation probably delə'roʃ, with delə'roʃiz for the possessive *Delaroche's* and the plural (*the*) *Delaroches*, as well as the possessive plural (*the*) *Delaroches'*. Apart from this name, categories (a) and (b) would both be treated alike, since none of the final consonant letters in (a) would be sounded; thus, for example, 'renou.

Category (c) is meant to cover names ending in a pronounced *s*. Here there is for the possessive a distinct choice between writing, for instance, *de Lesseps' achievement*, pronouncing this də 'leseps ə'ʃtiːvmənt (exactly as though the name itself ended in *p*) or də 'lesepsiz ə'tʃiːvmənt; and writing *de Lesseps's achievement*, which can really only be pronounced də 'lesepsiz ə'tʃiːvmənt. Similarly with *Dreyfus* 'dreifus or 'dreifəs. But *Saint-Saëns may* be pronounced (in the singular) without sounding the final *s*, i.e. sɛ̃sã, in which case its possessive will fall into category (a)/(b), thus for example *Saint-Saëns' life* or *Saint-Saën's life*, both sɛ̃sãz 'laif. One suspects that an English speaker would be less likely to say sɛ̃sãsz 'laif, owing to an instinctive avoidance of the *four* sibilants, *even if* he normally pronounced the *s* at the end of *Saint-Saëns* without the possessive, as in *I like Saint-Saëns*. Now for the plurals of such names, theoretically *es* could simply be added, but in fact the clumsiness in appearance of, for example, (*the de*) *Lessepses* causes us to prefer to write (*the de*) *Lesseps* and pronounce either ðə də 'lesepsiz or ðə də 'leseps. It is, of course, the same with English names; thus Mr and Mrs Haynes can be referred to as ðə 'heinziz, even though one would prefer to write *the Haynes* for this. Only in the case of ðə 'dʒounziz, in the common phrase *to keep up with the Jones*, is it in fact more usual to see this actually written out as *the Joneses*, or even *the Jones'es*—presumably in an attempt to avoid the awkward appearance, though the apostrophe is really not justified.

Notice that where the *s* is spelt *ce* the clumsiness is much less, thus Mr and Mrs Price can be spelt out as *the Prices*, Mr and Mrs Freece as *the Freeces*, and so forth.

The names in category (d) all end in *s* or *x*, but these letters would not be pronounced in English when not pronounced in French. So the names all end in vowel sounds and are therefore treated like those in category (a)/(b). However, the *spelling* of their plurals is a different matter and could only be, for example, *the Dumas, father and son* ðə 'djuːmaːz 'faːðər ənd 'sʌn, whereas the possessive, pronounced the same, would be written *Dumas'* or *Dumas's*. It would be *wrong* to write just an apostrophe after words ending in *x*. So, for instance: *Giraudoux's works*.

Regarding the use of *the* before the plurals of names containing a (French) article, the English speaker uses the English article when required, quite regardless of the presence of the French one.

[P.A.D.M.]

10. We can use the phrasal verb *check up* as a noun. Is it ever possible to use *check up on* as a noun also?

ANSWER. No, it is not possible to use any three-component phrasal verb substantially. You can go to your GP (general practitioner) for a *check up* and he may then *check up on* your recent medical record, but you do not normally speak of going to him for a *check up on*.

No phrasal-prepositional verb (*catch up with, come in for, do away with, fall back on, go through with, look down on, put up with*) ever functions as a noun. This simple and useful rule is well worth bearing in mind. Notice, by the way, that the first particle is always an adverb, whereas the second and final one is always a preposition.   [S.P.]

11. I have just been comparing statements about the position of the participial construction *weather permitting* in various British, American,

and Japanese grammars, and I find no consensus of opinion whatever. Some recommend initial position in the sentence, others mid-position, and others again end-position. What do you think? Under *weather*, substantive 2g, *The Oxford English Dictionary* states that this phrase is 'often appended to an announcement (e.g. of the sailing of a vessel) to indicate that it is conditional on the weather being favourable'. Does 'appended' here imply end-position?

ANSWER. Yes, it does. If you study the three illustrative quotations, you will see that they all have *weather permitting* at the end of the sentence, appended as an afterthought. The first one to be recorded is surprisingly late in time. It is taken from *The London Gazette* of 1712. But the OED says 'often', not 'always appended'. It is, indeed, unprofitable to lay down hard and fast rules about the position of this absolute construction in the sentence, for the plain reason that it is an adverb phrase. Adverbs and adverbials are, as you know, the most mobile of all word-classes. According to style and purpose, the speaker or writer may put them at the beginning, somewhere in the middle, or at the end.

Incidentally, your question involves an important principle relating to the compilation of grammar books for students of English as a second language. No grammarian should bother his readers with any rules that are not utterly essential for the speaking and writing of good and clear English.   [S.P.]

12. During recent months I have seen and heard many instances of *different than*, many of them from educated people. Is this likely to become acceptable usage?

ANSWER. It has been accepted usage for centuries, especially in sentences where *different* is not immediately followed by its preposition. *Present fashions in dress favour different varieties of colours than ever before* is neater than *Present fashions in dress favour varieties of colours different from those favoured before*. You find, *different than* in Addison, Goldsmith, Coleridge, Southey, Thackeray, Newman, and Wells—all careful writers of repute.

Will *different than* ever supersede *different from* entirely? There are no signs of this at present, not even in New York newspapers and magazines. No American journalist would ever write *Pines are different than oaks: they shed no leaves in the fall*; or *The two are not the same: this is different than that*.   [S.P.]

13. Is *fewer* going out of use? I have just read a newspaper account in which 'less accidents on the roads than in the previous month' are reported. Why not 'fewer accidents'?

ANSWER. In Question Box for May 1969, *E.L.T.*, XXIII, p. 301, I dealt at some length with the use of less and *fewer* as attributive adjectives. There, among other things, I stated as a principle that *less* is normally used with quantities (uncountables) and *fewer* with pluralisers (countables). According to this principle your journalist should certainly have reported 'fewer accidents'. He was evidently in a hurry, and he did not choose his words carefully. He may have been thinking of the total of accidents as a statistical quantity, or as a number in a list. In other words, he was not properly conscious at the time of writing of any clear distinction between countables and uncountables.

This often occurs in other contexts and that is why, perhaps, *fewer* is not being used quite so frequently today as it was twenty years ago. It is, however, a true comparative. It is hardly likely to go out of use altogether.   [S.P.]

14. With many transitive phrasal verbs the particle can either precede or follow the direct object, except when that object is a pronoun and then it must precede. Now why does this simple and useful rule not apply

to the phrasal verb *come across*? Why must I always say *I came across the picture when I was tidying up*? Why not *I came the picture across*?

ANSWER. The rule about transitivity applies to the verb alone and not to the verb-particle combination. Apart from such a colloquial expression as *Don't come it*, the verb *come* is by its very nature intransitive. That is why no choice of word order is ever possible with *come across* meaning 'find by chance'. The direct object must follow that preposition which alone makes the phrasal verb transitive. That is why *I came the picture across* and *I came it across* are both equally unacceptable. [S.P.]

15. I have recently read in a newspaper: 'Britain won the world amateur ice-dancing championships for the last four years.' Do you approve of the use of the simple past tense in this sentence?

ANSWER: No, I regard this as careless writing. The present perfect tense *has won* would be preferable since the period of time covered by the victories began in the past and continues into the present. A past action, or series of actions, is reported from the standpoint of the present. Moreover, *championship* should be singular. There was only one annual award.   [S.P.]

16. How do you explain the pronunciation of the word *record* (substantive), compared to the pronunciation of *Oxford*? Both words are stressed on the first syllable, but *ord* in *record* is not weakened as in *Oxford*.

ANSWER. English spelling being what it is, it is generally possible to pick out any letter or combination of letters you please, and find that the sound or sounds pronounced in some of the words concerned are at variance with those letters—that is, that there is not a consistent relationship between sound and spelling. Thus in the examples given, the letters *or* 'correspond to' a certain

sound in the word *record* and to a *different* sound in the word *Oxford*. It is rarely possible to suggest a valid reason, and even more rarely possible to point to the actual reason, *why* this is so. All one can usefully talk about is the fact that these anomalies and irregularities exist, and the foreign student of English simply has to resign himself to mastering two sets of data: the proper sequences of letters in written words, and the proper sequences of sounds in spoken words—without being able, in very many cases, to find regular and exception-free correspondences between the two sets. (It is owing to this lack of regular correspondence that a 'phonetic notation' serves the useful purpose of indicating the proper sequences of sounds.)

At most, certain tendencies can be observed which may throw light on some of the inconsistencies. First, a word in frequent use can be 'reduced' safely, i.e. without loss of intelligibility, by the omission of a sound or the shortening or centralisation of a vowel, and therefore *tends* to be reduced in one or other of these ways; conversely, rare words, or those easily confused with others auditorily resembling them, tend to retain fuller forms, involving in some cases longer vowels and more definite vowel qualities, in order to avoid possible ambiguities arising in practice. Secondly—and this is quite a different point—syllables nearest to strong stresses in English are more likely to suffer reduction than those farther away from strong stresses. So the second syllable of *Oxford* may be described as being weakened under the influence of the strong stress immediately preceding, and also because of the familiarity of the word, i.e. its frequent occurrences in the speech of a great many people. On the other hand, the personal name *Oxenford* may be heard pronounced by some with the 'full' vowel in the last syllable, and this could be explained partly on the grounds of less familiarity, i.e. far less frequent occurrence in the speech of all but

comparatively few people, and partly because the *ford* syllable is at farther remove from the strong stress. In an intermediate category, place names such as *Hungerford, Wallingford*, etc., will be heard pronounced with centralised, i.e. weakened, vowel by most speakers, especially those familiar with a place, but perhaps with full vowel (as a kind of 'spelling pronunciation') by some of those unfamiliar with them. However, it may be noted that usages do vary in the English-speaking world: in American English, for instance, there would seem to be a greater readiness, on the whole, to produce 'spelling pronunciations' when dealing with rare or unfamiliar words, and to weaken unstressed syllables less—even in quite common words.

Another instance of the same kind of thing can be seen in the words *cupboard, cardboard, starboard, seaboard*. These are all structurally compounds, of course, but only the last is still felt to be one, and the comparative rarity of the word also doubtless helps to retain the full vowel in the second syllable. *Starboard* is likely to be pronounced similarly by most of those for whom the word is not extremely current, i.e. all except seafaring people, who regularly weaken the final syllable. In *cupboard* the original meaning of the final syllable is no longer felt (as is the case also with *Oxford*), and

all speakers weaken it in this very familiar word. In *cardboard*, though a common enough word, the literal meaning of the final syllable still counts for something, and this probably operates to retain the full vowel there for most speakers—though 'kɑːdbəd can be heard occasionally, and in some kinds of English.

Now as regards *record* (the other word quoted above) the case is different. Here we have one of a sizeable group of spellings each representing two disyllabic words (such as *import, transport, escort*, etc.): a noun, having strong stress on the first syllable, and a verb, with strong stress on the second. Obviously, when strong stress falls on the second syllable the vowel there is full; when the other word of such a pair is pronounced, *the fact of the existence also of* the word with the full vowel (and strong stress on it) seems to act as a 'retaining influence' on the vowel quality, even when it is not being stressed. For the American who, among others, may weaken the final syllable of *récord* and say 'rekəd or 'rekr̩d, it might be feasible to claim, by way of explanation, that it is the extreme commonness of the word, in this case, that overrides the fact that another word *recórd* (with full vowel) also exists. (This example goes against the more widespread tendency noted in American speech above.)   [P.A.D.M.]

Reviews

A GRAMMAR OF SPOKEN ENGLISH. By Harold E. Palmer and F. G. Blandford. Third edition, revised and rewritten by Roger Kingdon. *Heffer.* 341 pp. £2·50.

A Grammar of Spoken English, written by H. E. Palmer in 1924, and revised with the help of F. G. Blandford in 1939, has had a far-reaching influence on the teaching of English —an influence perhaps out of proportion to the number of those who have actually studied the book. For many, the title alone may have been enough to effect a radical change of attitude towards grammar. No doubt there remain people teaching English —most of them inadequately qualified, a few of them worthy adherents of a lost cause—for whom grammar is a matter of how one classifies and changes written words. But it is now generally accepted that English grammar, like the grammar of any language that is written down, has many significant features for which normal writing is only a partial representation or which are not normally represented in writing at all. In bringing about this general acceptance, Palmer's *Grammar of Spoken English* has played a leading part.

The original book was not without its defects. As an indefatigable pioneer, Palmer forged ahead, making discoveries which those who followed him, with greatly improved linguistic equipment, could often do no more than verify, but leaving his colleagues and followers with quite a lot to tidy up. Those who did try to study his *Grammar of Spoken English* often found it rather a jumble; and the need for a revision has been increasingly felt. Roger Kingdon was the man for this purpose. Like Palmer himself, he worked at University College London under Professor Daniel Jones; and he is closer to Palmer's own generation than most of us who are left in this field.

This edition of the *Grammar* is therefore the third, and the revision it presents has been most thorough in the sense both of having been painstakingly carried out and of being complete. The whole work has been much more neatly arranged, and the new type-setting has made it much easier for us to distinguish headings from text, and text from examples in phonetic transcription. The original detailed Table of Contents, spread over 17 pages, has been replaced by a clear 2½ page table and then by an alphabetical index at the back of the book. A simpler phonetic transcription has been used. Palmer's Part I (Phonetics) is now headed 'Pronunciation' and divided into two sub-sections, one on Phonetics and a new one entitled Tonetics. In the latter sub-section, Kingdon has briefly and very clearly developed ideas which are already well-known to readers of his works on stress and intonation—and which had appealed to Palmer, though Palmer did not live to develop them personally. The section on Tonetics is therefore one that Palmer himself might well have included in a third edition, and it is a very valuable improvement.

Part II, still headed 'Parts of Speech', and Part III, now called 'Sentence Structure' instead of 'Parts of the Sentence', follow the main lines of the original. The retention

of the term 'Parts of Speech'; the relative length of this section (255 pages, as against 42 pages on Sentence Structure); adherence to the old custom of referring to the verb *to introduce*, etc. (instead of simply *introduce*); and the insertion of definitions from notional grammar, e.g. 'A noun is defined as a word used to name a person or thing', which was not in the original book; such features suggest a conservative approach unusual in this Chomskian age. They also suggest a bold independence, firmly declaring itself when so many are following the latest band-waggon. Certainly in re-writing Palmer's section on the verb, Kingdon has advanced some views of his own which show freedom from fashionable schools of thought. His theory of the aspects of accomplishment and of activity (*they take* versus *they are taking*) is, I believe, an original contribution to English grammar. However, it is not a peculiarity of the grammar of spoken English; and we must wait and see whether other grammarians and teachers will adopt it. His treatment of the modals *is* specially applicable to spoken English; and his theory that the *may* of permission has a weak pronunciation while the *may* of possibility has not, is very interesting. Whether it would stand up to the objective examination of a corpus of examples is another matter; the reader might have to regard Kingdon's statements in this part of the book as exploratory rather than conclusive.

The degree of accuracy in the use of phonetic symbols, stress and tone marks is extremely high, as it needs to be in such a book. Only one or two points troubled me in this respect: for example, why ˈfɑːm ˈhaus with the same stress-pattern as ˈkamp ˈtʃɛə? And why ˈðiːz ˈbuks (high falling tone) but ˈsiksti ˌmen (low falling tone). Apart from a very few such details, teachers will find this book a very clear and reliable guide.

The *Grammar* has been given a

new look, which in itself might have sufficed to assure the work of a place on our shelves for many years yet. With the numerous and very careful improvements that Roger Kingdon has made in the text, this edition should unquestionably be studied in detail by teachers in initial and in-service training; and all teachers of English would be well advised to keep it permanently at hand.

THIS LANGUAGE-LEARNING BUSINESS. H. E. Palmer and H. Vere Redman. Language and Language Learning series. *O.U.P.* 1969. x+166 pp. 11s. 6d.

This is a timely reissue of a celebrated book on language-teaching and language-learning which was first published in this country by Harrap in 1932. At a time when would-be teachers of English as a foreign or second language are confronted by a bewildering variety of approaches to language-teaching recommended to them and sometimes urged upon them by acknowledged experts in linguistics and/or pedagogy, it is salutary to read a book like this. Back in the thirties the authors of this book dealt with most of the problems which confront the language-teacher today, and also with most of the solutions which have been suggested. Those of us who work in the field of teacher-training have had ample opportunity to observe that as a generality it is the less gifted language-teacher who, appalled by the difficulties of his allotted task, looks to this or that particular approach or method as the panacea. It may well be that his initial attitude is eclectic; the fact remains that as he grows older and his pedagogical reflexes begin to tire he may be seen to cling to his chosen view or method with a conviction that verges on desperation. The distinguished authors of this book saw this alarming possibility a long time ago and in an inimitable and very readable way did their best to dispel a little of the methodological

fog before it became too thick. One might with profit discuss how far they succeeded in their intention, but this is not the place for that; suffice it to say that this book can still teach us something.

It would be unfair in 1970 to criticise a book of this kind for being too obviously disingenuous. Since the thirties language teachers the world over have discovered new words for old things; to that extent it might be said that they have become more sophisticated. The frightening and at the same time impressive thing about this book is that here and there in the rather curious correspondence which forms a large part of it one hears oneself speaking. The terminology may be different but the substantial part is there; one detects the impatient, slightly hectoring tone, the taking of this or that for granted, the termino-logical miasma. It is likely that this book can perform a useful service for us all, for many of the fine distinc-tions which educational and linguistic experts are inclined to make may be shown to be ultimately of little significance compared with the broadly-based fallacies which they conceal.

The book outlines a number of familiar approaches to language-teaching in a way which entertains as well as edifies. It is one thing to advocate, as some teacher-trainers do, an eclectic approach which draws from a number of different methods those features which the teacher considers suit his purpose best; it is quite another to equip the young teacher so that he can make a choice informed by a clear under-standing of the principles of language-learning. To enable his pupils to possess language 'as speech'—using that phrase in the special sense which Palmer and Redman gave to it—the teacher needs to have almost perfect control of the language himself. It might be supposed that this book overlooks that basic fact. But consider the title; we are not concerned under this heading with

where the teachers are to come from so much as with what they are to do, or more exactly with what they are to require their pupils to do. If communication is in large part a method of thinking aloud by which we allow others to share in our thought processes, and this is a possible definition of it, then un-critical adherence to the principles of situationally contextualised teaching is as absurd as any other doctrinaire approach, for it overlooks the possibility, which is very real in the world of a child, of imaginative projection of the personality into times and situations which need only be hinted at or symbolised. In view of this generally enlightened line which is characteristic of the book as a whole, it is a little surprising to find it advocating a question-and-answer technique in the second stage of the specimen course which it outlines, and referring to it as 'the most effective of all the language-learning exercises ever devised'.

The book is supplemented by a well-written and informative bio-graphical sketch of H. E. Palmer by his daughter Mrs Dorothée Anderson and by a classified list of Palmer's publications based on that compiled by Dr H. Bongers.

NEW LOWER CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH. Linton Stone. *Macmillan.* 1969. x+268 pp. 7s.

This is a new and enlarged edition of a book originally published in 1965 and reprinted four times. Of its kind it is extremely efficient, the explana-tions are full, concise, and clear, and the exercises are relevant, providing plenty of practice.

One merit of the book is that the English used is realistic and not academic. There is a useful section on phrasal verbs. Help with spelling is sensibly related to the International Phonetic Alphabet. The letter-writing section is an example of the realistic use of English; though it is debatable whether exercises of the How-not-to-do-it or Spot-the-mistake type are

desirable. Some teachers think that the emphasis on the incorrect version may cause it to be memorised and used. This is a matter of opinion. There are few exercises of this type and the approach to learning and practice, with these few exceptions, is notably positive throughout the book. This would be a useful reference book for those who may not need to work through it.

The book is closely keyed to the requirements of the Cambridge Revised Lower Certificate Examination. One cannot criticise a book for doing what it sets out to do—and this one fulfils its aims admirably—one can only criticise the examination.

THE PATTERN OF GOVERNMENT. W. Bonney Rust. *Pitman.* 1969. xvi+319 pp. 18s. paperback, 35s. hardback.

Dr W. Bonney Rust's book is mainly intended for newcomers to the study of the British style of government and is addressed to both British and foreign students. Factual information and the principles underlying the extraordinarily complex pattern of the government of the United Kingdom are judiciously amalgamated.

Although the contents of the book are, of necessity, largely similar to others dealing with the same topic—parliament, the party system, the functions of the Prime Minister and cabinet, the civil service, the judiciary and local government—other matters which are too often ignored in books of this type are given a full survey. For example, Dr Rust gives a brilliantly concise account of how finance and public administration are controlled, of the nature of and reason for 'delegated administration', of the reasons why legally untrained individuals are able to control administrative tribunals.

There are, however, certain deficiencies in the book which may puzzle the reader, particularly the non-British reader, and send him away with his questions unanswered. Perhaps the main source of confusion lies in the author's failure to provide the definition of technical terms when he first uses them. 'Government', in the abstract, is mentioned on the first page; 'the government', as equivalent to 'the executive' occurs on page 14; but the technical meaning is not fully defined until page 28. So, also, the student may be able to deduce what a 'green paper' is (p. 67), but he may not be able to appreciate the difference between this and a 'white paper', although the latter has seven distinct references. What exactly are the duties of the 'President of the Council' (p. 160, but not indexed); What does the 'Solicitor-General' do that differs from what the 'Attorney-General' does? What are 'stamp duties' (p. 160, but not indexed)? What is a 'Royal Charter', and why was this and not an Act of Parliament necessary to establish the British Broadcasting Corporation (p. 187)?

It is to be hoped that these and similar blemishes will be removed in a later printing. A footnote defining the terms when first used, or a reference indicating where, later in the book the definition can be found would generally be sufficient to resolve the student's difficulties.

There is a useful bibliography of about fifty books for those who wish to pursue more detailed studies.

This is a very good book. A copy should certainly be in the library of all institutions where English studies are conducted.

FOR AND AGAINST. L. G. Alexander. *Longmans.* 1969. 66 pp. 6s.

The thirty passages, each a page long, which make up this 'oral practice book for advanced students of English' deal with controversial topics such as 'Childhood is certainly not the happiest time of your life', 'Television is doing irreparable harm', and 'Only a madman would choose to live in a large modern city'. Most are 'harmless' topics, which will not lead the teacher or his students into the deep waters of religion or politics

and get anybody into trouble. A few perhaps, such as 'Any form of education other than co-education is simply unthinkable' or 'Compulsory military service should be abolished in all countries', are trickier, and will not do everywhere.

The author puts a case provocatively on the left-hand page, while on the page opposite appears a summary of the argument and notes for a counter-argument. At the end of the book forty additional topics are listed.

This book can obviously be used in various ways, as the author points out. He suggests a procedure which begins with listening, and he includes reading and reading aloud, answering and asking questions, and oral composition before coming to class discussion or debate. But it is chiefly for the last purpose that the teacher of fairly advanced adults will find the book helpful and stimulating.

The passages are lightly and pleasantly written in a fairly colloquial style, free of slang, but occasionally verging on the 'literary'.

COMMON ERRORS IN WRITTEN ENGLISH.
J. Y. K. Kerr. *Longmans*. 1969.
x+81 pp. 8s.

The errors referred to in the title of this book are those made by Greek-speaking adult learners. The author analysed over a thousand essays or free compositions written in Greece by university students, candidates for post-graduate awards, and people studying for the Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency. The errors are classified under 14 headings: word order, sentence structure, negation, verbs, prepositions, nouns, article, determiners, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions and other connectives, vocabulary items frequently confused or misused, and spelling. Mistakes in punctuation and handwriting have not been included.

The examples are set out in columns, 'incorrect' on the left and 'correct' on the right. Some might argue that students should not be exposed to incorrect examples. There is little force in this argument, however, if the examples embody errors they have been making day after day. Adult learners, in particular, can only benefit from having their attention drawn to the familiar error and, by contrast, the unfamiliar 'right thing'.

Some of the errors are elementary, e.g. *he hide* for *he hides*, and may, with students at this level, be merely slips. Very many are evidently the result of using translation methods in the early stages. The causes of the errors are not suggested, and the author emphasises that the book is a source-book and not a textbook or even a reference book.

A great number of the errors exemplified are commonly made in various parts of the world, having native languages very different from Greek. It would be interesting as well as useful to have more such collections published.

LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS.
J. F. Wallwork.
Heinemann Educational Books.
1969. viii+184 pp. 30s.

In recent years several books have appeared which aim to interpret modern thinking on language to the interested layman and to provide an introduction to linguistics for students and teachers. This, too, is Mrs Wallwork's aim, one which she successfully fulfils in this clearly-presented and pleasingly written book. Her immediate target is perhaps the British teacher-in-training, but her experience as a lecturer at University College, Nairobi, ensures that she also bears in mind the needs and problems of the teacher of English as a second or foreign language, and particularly the trainer of such teachers.

Mrs Wallwork writes from the standpoint of the teacher rather than of the theoretical linguist. She is, however, well and widely informed about contemporary thinking on language and linguistics, and, what is

most important, has a sound and un-prejudiced appreciation of the role of linguistics in language teaching. Her chapter on 'Language and Language Learning' is salutary for both teachers and linguists. Her main concern is with language in its widest sense, with the part that it plays in personal development, in education, and in society. She frequently stresses the link between linguistics, psychology, and soci-ology, and when discussing the contribution of linguistics to the teaching of English (here as a mother tongue) she says (Chapter 10) 'But the most valuable of all perhaps will be the closer linking of language with society, or better, with people.'

For a book of its length, 'Language and Linguistics' achieves a remark-ably wide coverage without being superficial, confusing, or dull. As well as outlining the mechanism of speech and the patterning of language Mrs Wallwork devotes considerable space to problems of meaning, varieties of language, and language learning and teaching, and she even finds space for a brief historical survey, 'Language Past and Present'. Technical terms are carefully defined, and examples lively and well-chosen.

Mrs Wallwork's viewpoint is naturally influenced by her own experience in linguistics. Her model for her description of English is based, as she acknowledges, on the scale and category theory formulated by Michael Halliday, but she is at pains to point out that this is not the only possible description; and in a later chapter she gives a balanced summary of the main linguistic theories. She fails perhaps to bring out the basic difference in approach between transformational grammar and the other theories she mentions, but this is probably due to inevitable simplification and condensation. Similarly, her account of the prin-ciples of modern foreign language teaching is somewhat over-simplified, giving the impression that the oral, structural, and situational approaches are mutually exclusive.

A refreshing feature of the book is its lack of dogmatism; Mrs Wallwork is careful to present alternative views, indicate unsolved problems, and point to work in progress. It offers no cut-and-dried solutions, but pro-vides the reader with ample stimulus for thought and further investigation, helped by well-chosen but not over-whelming bibliographies.

Books and Periodicals Noted

Foreign-Language Teaching:

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Index to Vols XXII, XXIII and XXIV

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

Contents

The views expressed in *English Language Teaching* are the contributors' own and not necessarily those of the publisher or the editor.

EDITORIAL

SHOULD TEACHERS whose command of English is rather poor teach English? There would be a great deal less teaching of English in the world if the answer to this question were a blunt no, and one hesitates to give so unqualified an answer. It is not even obvious that the best teacher is one who has acquired an almost effortless command, perhaps as a result of 'inheriting' the language as a mother tongue. The matter is more complicated. It is hard for the thoughtlessly competent to simplify, hard for them to see what the learners' difficulties are. Furthermore, command of a language is not necessarily accompanied by skill in teaching it. The unskilful teacher with a good command, and perhaps an analytical awareness of the language too, is common. On the other hand, the skilful teacher who is still struggling with the language himself and who has some considerable distance to go, but who can interest his pupils and transfer to them a good measure of his own language-using ability, is far from ràre. One may also ask two pertinent questions: is the relatively effective teacher, interested in the craft of teaching, unlikely to seek improvement of his command of the language? Is the relatively proficient user of the language, having found himself ineffective as a teacher, as likely to seek improvement in his teaching skill? This is no doubt a crude statement of the problem, indicating extremes only.

English as a Second Language: an Historical Sketch

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WHEN A LANGUAGE is taken seriously by those who speak it, and offers more than scholarly interest to people from other countries, it becomes important enough to be learnt by foreigners. This point English reached in the early sixteenth century. By this time the London dialect had finally been recognised as standard: it was the language of the court, of trade, and, to some extent, of the great universities. Yet in the sixteenth century there was still marked pessimism about the future of English: it was compared unfavourably with Latin as a language of scholarship, and with French and Italian as languages of culture. It was still not unthinkable to write anything intended to be of lasting value in Latin to counter the impermanence of English as a medium. But this hangover from the Middle Ages came to an end as England began to make its international mark as an aggressive maritime and trading nation. At the same time it was realised that if a people was to be educated as a whole, the vernacular was the logical language to use. The ferment of the Reformation, with its emphasis on bringing the liturgy and the Bible to the people in its own language focussed attention on English and was a major factor in refining it so that it could bear the intellectual load of the classical languages. Parallel with this movement was a determined effort from scholars outside the intellectual establishment, mainly young men from the Inns of Court and physicians, to bring the riches of classical literature to Englishmen in translation. While life was being infused into English, the classical languages were being strangled by rejection of the rich medieval tradition, thus creating a void into which the vernaculars, including English, could move.

The sixteenth century saw contemporary languages as vehicles of communication: their relevance as languages of scholarship was still to be proved. Except in the classical languages, the educational theory of the time was largely based on induction. In a sense this was making a virtue out of necessity, as the first grammar of English was published in 1586 by William Bullokar. But as this was printed in a private system of spelling, it could hardly have had much effect. In 1594 Paul Greaves published his *Grammatica anglicana*, a Latin grammar of English based on the work of the French philosopher, Pierre de la Ramée. As well as being intended for his own countrymen, it was specifically

directed at foreigners who would be interested in learning English. During the next fifty years a number of grammars of English appeared in England written in both Latin and English, and a small number were published in French and other continental languages.

Probably under the influence of classical languages, there had been some dissatisfaction with this state of affairs. Seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century language-teachers came under the influence of *la grammaire générale*, seeing all languages as built on the one frame of logic and thus amenable to teaching by comparative methods. But at the same time there was a minority opinion that usage was all important, and vigorous polemic went on in both England and the continent that had its effect on English-teaching methods. The final point of this tendency was the grammar-translation method, which still has its followers.

Induction was rediscovered at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and under the influence of the 'natural' and 'direct' methods language teaching began to shake itself free from grammar and to take on a strong behavioural cast. These tendencies gathered strength near the end of the century with the canonisation of the spoken language, and continued during the twentieth century.

It is against this background that we must see how the four components of teaching, selection, gradation, presentation, and repetition evolved to meet the needs felt at each period.

Modern practice in selection owes much to work done in other languages. Selection depends on achieving a balance between four factors: frequency of occurrence, the number of language users who use the units under discussion, usefulness in given circumstances, and the possibilities of using units in structures. Most work on selection has concerned the word, though the more difficult task of defining and selecting structures has also been attempted with some success.

One of the most comprehensive modern schemes of selection was that of I. Morris. Following H. E. Palmer and Michael West, he divided all vocabulary into content and grammatical words (in his terms, *referential* and *non-referential*) and then divided referential vocabulary into concrete and abstract. Each class was defined by a series of binary oppositions[1]. The criteria of selection for teaching depended on recognition and active use. The aim was to select a vocabulary that would provide both a firm basis for linguistic behaviour and a nucleus for expansion of knowledge. Subsequent work has been mainly

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[1]Morris, I. 'Vocabulary Control', *E.L.T.*, 1 (1946); 2 (1947).

concerned with filling in details of this approach. Morris's scheme is based largely on the work of Michael West, which was in turn a refinement of Ogden and Richards's Basic English.

Parallel work had been going on in French under the auspices of Crédif.

West's central idea was the minimum adequate vocabulary (MAV). Like the parallel scheme of Crédif, this was organised round 'centres of interest', which would vary according to the needs and interests of the pupil. As well as dealing with immediate needs, the MAV was intended to provide a good linguistic basis for definition of new things and concepts. West took into account not only linguistic needs but also pedagogical factors. Much of the MAV was selected by a process of cost accounting, the effort of learning being balanced against the usefulness of the unit in question. The ideal selection combined low learning-effort with a high degree of usefulness[1].

West's ideas owed much to Basic English, a distillation of 'complete English' perfected by Ogden and Richards. The basis was the need for intelligible communication with the minimum of effort. In addition, Basic was to be easily expanded into 'complete English'. It was based on semantic and structural relationships between units of language and it implicitly rejected frequency as an infallible criterion. In selecting vocabulary, Basic had in a sense also selected, or rather emphasised, certain types of structure. Thus the English concatenation and the phrasal verb were immensely important in this scheme and many of the constructions proper to elevated prose were automatically rejected.

Previous twentieth-century schemes of selection had rested on frequency. Though originally intended to teach English as a first language, it was found to be useful in the second-language classroom, the Thorndike *Teachers' Word List* being taken over for this purpose. The word lists of Thorndike and Dewey had used frequency figures corrected against range, equating frequency with usefulness.

The twentieth century had added a statistical dimension to something that had so far been instinctive. Except for a short interruption during the heyday of the grammar-translation method, textbooks had aimed at using the most useful vocabulary. The determining factor was social behaviour. Thus English textbooks, in common with texts for other languages during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, drew their vocabulary from social life. Lessons, most often cast in the popular dialogue form, dealt

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[1] See West, M. 'Vocabulary Selection and the Minimum Adequate Vocabulary', *E.L.T.*, 8 (1954), 121–6.

with happenings in the home, social occasions, business and other matters falling within the experience of a tourist or business-man abroad. In vocabulary there was no pretention to statistical accuracy. Vocabulary counts in the texts of the time vary immensely and while they seem to agree on the headings under which vocabulary will be listed, there is very little agreement as to what words are to be universally taught.

Once the matter of the language course has been selected, it must be arranged in a teaching order. There are three problems central to this operation of gradation: whether grammar is to be granted pride of place, how the four skills of language are to be ordered, and how linguistic units are to be ordered.

Present-day practice and theory reject grammar as a beginning to the language course, but are not entirely certain about the place it is to have. There are two main schools of thought: one seems to reject grammar as a codification of reality, and therefore sees it as unnatural and almost reprehensible. One of the more moderate opinions on the matter is that of Gurrey: 'Instead, therefore, of the traditional grammar-lesson, in which explanation, illustration and definition loom large, the main grammar-learning should be done through the pupil using the items to be taught.'[1] This opinion was amplified by others, who accorded primacy to structural learning of the type proposed by Gurrey but who saw grammar as a useful crutch with which to order knowledge already gained by active methods[2]. This middle position has been adopted by Palmer as a reaction against the excesses of the direct method during the nineteen-twenties. However, many of the second generation of direct methodists had adopted Palmer's position as their own and saw grammar as useful at an advanced stage of learning:

> La grammaire est essentiellement une classification. Elle ordonne, elle rapproche, elle compare, elle établit des catégories, elle dégage de la complexité des faits les rapports constants qui les unissent et qu'elle appelle des règles. Nous fournirons désormais à l'élève ces catégories et ces cadres fixes, qu'il remplira de lui-même, d'abord de ses connaissances déjà acquises; dans lesquelles viendront se ranger ensuite ses connaissances nouvelles[3].

The natural method, and to some extent, the direct method after it, had rejected grammar as an unnatural proceeding. This was,

[1]Gurrey, P. *Teaching English as a Foreign Language*, p. 78. Longmans, London, 1955.

[2]See Dixson, R. J. *Practical Guide to the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language*, p. 21. Regents Publishers, New York, 1960.

[3]Varenne, G. 'Le rôle de la grammaire dans l'enseignement des langues vivantes', *Revue universitaire*, Vol. 14. No. 1 (1905), p. 21.

of course, a reaction against the grammar-translation method which developed out of the formal methods used during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Yet these two centuries had shown a clear ambivalence of attitude. On one side were the grammar grinders, who saw an approach through rules as the easiest way of lightening the pupils' load. Gobbett, for instance, remarks that the grammatical base of English and French are much the same, so that a pupil can learn English by seeing the different realisations of the same principle (e.g. that of verbal agreement) in the two languages[1]. Yet there was a strong body of opinion, championed by l'abbé Pluche and by Radonvilliers and foreshadowed almost in spite of themselves by the encyclopaedists, that grammar was a nuisance. At the beginning of the eighteenth century there is a long polemic in the *Journal des savans* on the necessity of grammar in modern-language teaching, and its utility in the teaching of classical languages came into question too. But the intellectual climate was such that grammar even crept into the dialogue manuals that were the staple of seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century English teaching. Standard sets of bilingual dialogues, like those of Peyton, Jacques Bellot, and Miège and Boyer, began with some incredibly arid dialogues on grammar, detailing matters ranging from spelling and pronunciation to the more abstruse parts of the complex sentence. Only then did they pass on to more congenial subjects.

The late sixteenth-century production of English grammars filled a long-felt need. Grammar was by now considered the logical beginning. As Thomas Granger proclaimed: 'First there must be principles or light of nature in the scholler, otherwise light is not comprehended out of darkness[2]. The light of nature first came in Latin, of course, though English courses in French appear as early as 1625.

In what order we are to introduce the language skills of comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing has not been settled. One school of thought, typified by Lado and the structural school, advocates beginning with the oral skills of listening and speaking, while the opposite point of view, championed by Michael West, looks on reading as the more logical starting-point because it is more accessible and leaves time for reflection. This, incidentally, was the point of view of Comenius three centuries ago. Palmer does not seem to have placed much importance on the question of listening versus reading, but he did lay down that a long period of passive assimilation should precede any acquisition of active skills.

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[1]Cobbet, W. *Le maître d'anglais*, p. 61. Paris, 1819.
[2]Granger, T. *Syntagma grammaticum*, p. 3. London, 1616.

The question during the preceding centuries is complicated by the factor of translation. It would appear from nineteenth-century texts that reading and writing were the only skills systematically taught in school, but in general they were approached through translation. Even the natural method seems to have been ambiguous in its practice. Marcel rejects the idea that speech should precede reading, while later exponents like Lambert Sauveur, who never taught English but who had some influence on English teaching, seem to preach the spoken language while proceeding from printed texts. The position is no clearer during the eighteenth century. The omnipresent crib in dialogue texts, together with the fact that bilingual dialogues were often used in the direction opposite to that intended, would indicate that both reading and speech depended in some measure on translation; although we do find in the writings of l'abbé Pluche descriptions and prescriptions of *Anschauungsunterricht* of the type later to be developed by Herbart. But the presence of elementary types of phonetic transcription in a third column make it clear that speech was one of the goals of the dialogue exercise. Likewise, we can state that free composition was probably the last step involved. Models for business correspondence are very common in textbooks for all the major languages of the time, more so in Portuguese than in English. These are usually found in an appendix.

Owing to the lack of grammars in the sixteenth century, it is clear that English was taught orally at the time. Shakespeare's *Henry V* gives us a good example of this in the lesson Alice gives Katherine on parts of the body. Likewise Florio's *First Fruits* and *Second Fruits* show that language teaching aimed at teaching polite and witty conversation. But actual documents from this period are too rare to be convincing. As a second language English came late on the scene, suffering as it did from the competition of French and Italian.

Despite later experimentation and theorising, the five bases that Palmer established for gradation have never really been abandoned by English teachers. They are frequency, ergonic combination, concreteness, proportion, general expediency[1]. Later practice, especially that based on Basic English, merely elaborated this position. In general, the same factors that govern selection govern gradation as well. Thus, though vocabulary statistics had a large part to play in gradation, English teachers like West and Richards tended to look to the intellectual consequence of placing units and structures at certain points in the

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[1] Palmer, H. E. *The Scientific Study and Teaching of Languages*, p. 240. Harrap, London, 1917.

course. As Richards wrote in 1943: 'Grading is a matter of entering as fully and imaginatively as possible into the learner's actual processes and arranging things so as to give him as lucid and as reasonable a task as possible.'[1] It was Palmer who gave the most solid description of gradation during the century, and like many other writers on language teaching he repeats Comenius almost verbatim. The prime element in gradation as Palmer saw it was non-linguistic: the ability of the student was to regulate both dosage and the actual units introduced; the student was to work from easy to difficult and from the frequent to the less frequent; finally progression was to be smooth.[2] The measure of facility that Palmer recommends is the case with which new material can be developed from old. This corresponds very neatly with West's and Richards's ideas on the importance of definition in the development of vocabulary and structure. Previous ideas on gradation of units were not the property of the English classroom only.

Thus Gouin, in distinguishing between the subjective and the objective language, and recommended teaching the objective language first. The objective language itself, i.e. the language relating to everyday life, was divided into segments relating to the child's experience. However, the more obvious general vocabulary was taught first, leaving until later lessons the minutia of simple operations like drawing water from a well, milking a cow, or making a cake.

Before Gouin little attempt had been made to theorise on gradation in teaching English. The criterion of need seems to have been the main factor, if one excepts the grammar-translation method where units were introduced according to a scheme of grammatical analysis, and vocabulary was introduced to illustrate grammar rules. The dialogues of the seventeenth and eighteenth century depended on a series of centres of interest in the manner of the courses developed during the twentieth century by Crédif. It was also assumed, it seems, that those who learned English would want to live in an English-speaking milieu. Thus the dialogues take one social situation at a time, going from actions like dressing in the morning, to meals, to shopping, to afternoon tea with the duchess, and even to a court ball. Though there is considerable care in isolating one domain of vocabulary from another, the critical factor of dosage is disregarded and even the most abstruse vocabulary suitable to the occasion is packed into each lesson. Thus it could be possible for nearly four thousand words to be treated in one book of dialogues. A pupil who sur-

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[1]Richards, I. A. *Basic English and its Uses*, p. 87. Norton, New York, 1943.
[2]Palmer, H. E., *op. cit.*, p. 121.

vived one of these courses could be assured that he could take part in any aspect of eighteenth-century life, even the morally reprehensible.

Again we find that the sixteenth century paid little attention to this aspect of things. What courses there were tended to revolve around school and social experience, with little care given to dosage of units.

It is rather difficult to assess how the language was actually taught. In comparison with the richness of material dealing with other languages, the documentation on English is relatively slim, especially in the seventeenth century, though with the increasing importance of English in our day we have a large body of literature on twentieth-century methods of teaching English to foreigners. Let us look at speech skills, reading, and composition in turn.

Early teachers did not separate listening from speaking, teaching both together and apparently assuming that one was the passive aspect of the other. Until the advent of modern phonetics two methods seem to have been used: distortion of spelling ('figured pronunciation') and comparison with habits in the mother tongue. It is impossible to separate the first attempts at phonetic alphabets from spelling reform, but the fact that certain of these early writers (Sir Thomas Smith, for example) wrote in Latin would lead one to suspect that at least part of the public was meant to be outside England. Grammars in Latin for the foreign learner were still being published at the end of the seventeenth century, one of the last being Christopher Cooper's *Grammatica anglicana* (London, 1685).

Smith and another early pioneer, John Hart, concentrated on phonemes, aiming to present each one through only one symbol. Intonation was not treated until Christopher Cooper's grammar. But he perpetuated the medieval confusion between length, stress, and tone in his discussion of the various 'accents' that existed in English. Though John Hart had paid some attention to combinatory variation, those that followed him did not, and accentuation, especially that due to changes in stress patterns of the sentence, was not distinguished from vocalic length. This confusion was not resolved until the twentieth century.

It seems that the main method of teaching pronunciation was imitation of the teacher. Cooper had struck on the minimal pair (*Grammatica anglicana*, p. 8) but he did not, as far as we know, develop it. Many authors of the seventeenth and eighteenth century used spelling as an indication of pronunciation:

(A) est long, quant il est suivy d'une Consonne & (e) final; Pour lors on doit le prononcer comme la diphthongue (ai);

comme *place*, place; *table*, table; *plague*, peste; *lame*, boiteux:
Prononcez plăice; tāible; plăigue; lāime[1].

In the dialogue books of the time, like Mason's *Grammaire
angloise* (1622), the English part of the dialogue was often tran-
scribed into figured pronunciation in a third column between
the English and the French. Some attempt was made at anatomical
description of sounds: Wiseman's Grammar, which appeared
during the reign of George III, had a long section, but just how
far this was used we have no way of knowing.

Contrastive teaching was likewise alphabet-bound. Noel
Barlement, the author of a series of polyglot grammars (1616),
gives tables like the following:

C a de divers sons, comme je note ci-dessous:

cha	xa	scia	sha	charbonnier
che	xe	scie	she	chevalier
chi	xi	sci	shy	chiche
cho	xo	scio	sho	chomeur
chu	xu	sciu	shu	chucas

français Espagnol Italien anglais[2].

This trend lasted until phonetics was developed in the nineteenth
century.

Phonetic notation was placed on a firmer basis by the activities
of the IPA at the beginning of the twentieth century. The first
application to English teaching was made by Trautmann in the
eighteen-eighties. Then, after a series of experiments with Bell's
Visible Speech, the modern notation was taken over by teachers
such as Passy as an adjunct to dictation lessons and to imitation.
Some teachers (for instance, Jespersen and Sweet) used the actual
science of phonetics in the classroom, others preferred not to
introduce the theory for fear of complicating the issue. Jones, it
seems, was the originator of intonation teaching with his diagrams
which appeared in 1909.

Until phonology developed as a serious branch of the study of
pronunciation, teachers tended to contrast unit with unit. Under
the influence of phonology, which was first used by American
teachers, teachers began to contrast system with system and
post-war methods of teaching tended to pass from the intonational
shape of the sentence to the phonetic realisation of its components.
The new emphasis on rhythmic and intonational factors paid
due attention to combinatory variation and to the differences
between American and British standards of pronunciation.
The older methods drawn from phonetics were not dropped

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[1]Peyton, *Elémens de la langue angloise*, p. 2. London, 1765.
[2]Barlement, N. *Colloquia et dictioariolum septem linguarum*, Antwerp, 1616.

but were absorbed into the phonological approach through expedients like minimal pairs and phonetic pattern-drills.

The first recorded means of teaching vocabulary were object lessons and translation. Until the advent of grammar-translation, the staple of the English lesson was the bilingual dialogue, where a word was literally translated in a parallel column. At this early stage means based on linguistics were little used, but near the end of the seventeenth century the idea of word families was borrowed from the Latin classroom by Cooper, who defined the parts of speech and showed how one could be derived from another. The emphasis on translation gave rise to parallel word lists, which are still with us. But as well as these the dialogue makers organised words in semantic fields. The concept of usefulness was behind these lists and most of the authors of this time were quite aggressive in putting the idea forward. It was later to be adopted by Gouin and Berlitz.

There were two contradictory movements in the nineteenth century. The idea of translated equivalents held the field, but the natural method reacted very strongly against it, preferring to go back to the old object-lesson. This received solid backing from Herbartian psychology and was one of the main planks of the direct method. But even within the method attitudes varied, and the difference of opinion continues to this day. Some rejected translation altogether. The opposition, whose strongest voice was Palmer, regarded this total rejection as the 'fallacy of the direct method' and preferred to keep translation in reserve.

Twentieth-century teaching inherited this difference of opinion and the methods that went with it. Following Palmer, modern teachers tend towards the factor of association in teaching new vocabulary. Basic English put forward the idea of expansion of vocabulary by definition with known units. This point of view was aggessively championed by West. A pupil was to be made fluent in a limited vocabulary and then encouraged to expand it by use, in real situations if possible.

In combining these building blocks of sound and vocabulary into structures, the most comprehensive norms are probably those of Politzer: he advocates going from complete structures; emphasising elements that are subject to interference from the first language; relying on habit formation using rules only as descriptions and not prescriptions and arranging structures in a logical sequence. The first of these ideas was, of course, a warhorse of the natural and direct methods. Its main realisations were in the use of pattern practice and dialogue methods.

In detailing the methods of teaching structure in English, we do not have the rich literature that exists in other languages; that is, if we except the twentieth century. Structural teaching in

the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries seem to rest on two procedures: the learning of grammar rules and dialogue practice, both being allied with translation. In general, methods before the end of the eighteenth century rely on imitation of models: business letters and the like. As in most of the modern languages, the gulf between theory and practice is quite wide. It closes at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The nineteenth century fixed on translation as the best means of teaching structure. Translation was not distinguished from composition, and skill in composition was meant to rise out of the grammar lesson. Several grammars, including those of Cobbett and John Jump (Paris, 1829) used an interlinear adaptation of the Hamiltonian method wherein only the grammatical words were translated and the pupil had to fill in content words. This support was gradually withdrawn as the course went on. Others, like the extremely successful methods of Ollendorf and Ploetz, relied entirely on translation of set sentences and passages. Parallel with this stream was the natural method, which depended mainly on oral composition developing from the object lessons which taught vocabulary. Such were Marcel, Sauveur, and Gouin.

Pattern practice did not come into English teaching, despite its use in other languages, until the appearance of Prendergast's 'Mastery System'[1]. Some substitution tables had already appeared in seventeenth-century manuals, but they had been integrated into the dialogue and had been used more to teach vocabulary. Prendergast claimed that it was possible to teach a whole language by 'ringing the changes' on a sentence of twenty words. The scheme was fully worked out by R. S. Rosenthal, whose manuals for German, French, and English appeared at the turn of the century.

But it would seem that Harold E. Palmer was the twentieth-century originator of pattern practice. Working from his theory of ergonics, he arranged structures in a sequence from simple to complex, worked out the bones of each new structure and commuted words in and out of them. Each new structure was a development of its predecessor. This idea was taken up by the Orthological Institute of London, which existed to teach Basic English. In America pattern practice derived from the ASTP and from the invention of the language laboratory, which made it possible to provide endless repetition without fatigue to the teacher, and also provided more precise control over both dosage and expansion. This type of exercise was a preparation

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[1]Prendergast, T. *Handbook to the Mastery Series*, Appleton, New York, 1870.

for the traditional dialogue, free composition, and translation.

The twentieth century added two important features to English teaching: cultural teaching and contrastive teaching. In one sense the first was a discovery of the direct method, the most able exponent of this aspect of teaching being Karl Breul. In another sense it was not so new. The social class that could afford to learn languages moved in a society with a widely shared aristocratic and middle-class culture that differed only in details from country to country, so that language teaching could be put into a familiar cultural context which had, however, some new features. Thus it was on situations that most language teaching before the nineteenth century rested. Contrastive teaching is inherent in translation teaching, but before this century it was widely assumed in English teaching that languages had more common than different features. This is vividly illustrated by an English grammar of the 1850s which states that a pupil who knows his French grammar well need only learn the rules peculiar to English[1]. This relic of *grammaire générale* is quite typical of most of the language teaching of the time, let alone English. Where the twentieth century differed was in making contrastive analysis apply to all levels of language and in contrasting facts rather than rules.

English teaching did not develop independently of methodology in other modern languages. Like them it depended on awareness of English as a social tool and the counter-influence of the traditional approach to languages through grammatical analysis. The balance has shifted between these two poles, causing polemics, both constructive and useless. It is safe to say that no one method of teaching English will ever come to supersede all others in a permanent sense: social needs and conditions change, bringing corresponding changes in educational and methodological outlook. These changes control what data is used from the sciences supporting language teaching, and even govern the direction of research. In this English teaching is no exception.

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Specifying the Objectives:
Is a Linguistic Definition Possible?

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AS OBJECTIVES I am taking simply the declared and, one hopes, the considered aims of teaching English as they are set forth in general syllabuses, in examination regulations, and in documents representative of national educational policy, often expressed in general terms designed to be acceptable to administrative and professional opinion. Before any detailed teaching programme or course can be designed, aims have to be translated

into terms which can provide linguistic guidance about the actual items and skills to be taught. Thus a linguistic definition is required to describe *what* is to be taught, if the general aims explain *why* it is to be done. In addition to a specification of what he has to teach, the teacher also needs to know the level of skill expected and indeed how the knowledge and skills to be taught are to be tested. Examination aims need also to be looked at to see whether they are adequately specific.

At present aims are usually expressed in terms which are often vague, seldom realistic, and nearly always non-linguistic. Course writers, teachers, and teacher trainers often have to interpret the aims of the syllabus without much help, and sometimes must do so arbitrarily in order to decide what precisely to teach. As a result, we may find an unnecessary and confusing variety of interpretations coexisting within a single educational system; a good deal of irrelevant teaching is a common side-effect, as well as general looseness and vagueness about training teachers of English, because no-one is quite sure exactly what these teachers are going to teach. The gap between aims and classroom procedures can be very wide, for administrators may be satisfied by aims which merely sound good, while teachers may become subservient to established teaching methods which have previously been found effective, without questioning sufficiently the value of what they teach. Can this state of affairs be improved by more detailed linguistic definitions of objectives? If so, how can these definitions best be made and in what terms?

It should be noted that in many countries, especially those of western Europe, expressed aims are not specific to English, but may also be those common to all modern languages taught in the schools. The following examples of aims are provided merely as illustrations, but they exemplify some of the points already made:

First, a very lofty aim for teachers in training:

'To enable students to become intelligentsia capable of communicating their cultural heritage both to their own students and to foreigners at home and abroad.'

Next, an equally exalted aim, but this time laid down for elementary and junior secondary schools:

'The English course aims at producing a cultured, informed, useful and perceptive citizen through his ability to understand, speak, read and write, in this case English, with a measure of ease, finesse and discrimination.'

A little more realistically the same syllabus then goes on to say:

'After five years of learning English the pupil is expected to be able to do the following: 1. Understand English spoken at normal speed. 2. Communicate sensibly with an English-speaking person within certain reason-

able areas. 3. Read simple English with ease, fluency, and understanding. 4. Write a paragraph in English using the basic structures of the language.'

An extract from a secondary-school syllabus in English:

'To teach pupils to write so that they may be able to communicate in writing with the outside world for cultural, political, and economic purposes.'

Another example[1] which provides clearly for a double purpose, which is not however confused:

'The aim is to train children in the use of the language and to contribute to their intellectual growth and enrichment through the study of texts representative of the life and thought of the foreign culture.'

If we turn to the other arbiter of pupils' destinies—the examination regulations—for statements of aims, we often find imprecise statements:

'The examination will test the ability to use the language as a medium of immediate communication—to deal aurally and orally with the basic situations of everyday life.'

Another example:

'The examination will test the ability to use the language to express, describe, and discuss one's own ideas and those of others.'

The above examples are not meant to be typical but they do illustrate the general difficulty which those who formulate aims have in expressing them in precise language. They also illustrate the tendency to express the ideal at some danger to the practical. Several countries where English has a special importance (as a medium of education for example) have dispensed with such statements altogether: they are now taken for granted. In their place there may be a detailed syllabus, sometimes highly competent. Other countries may specify a particular course or textbook for use in schools, accepting its implied aims. In yet other countries departments of education, after expressing lofty and highly unrealistic aims, come down to earth with a crash by providing a detailed scheme of instruction which seems to have no relation whatsoever to these aims. While it seems legitimate to make general statements about aims in relation to the general school curriculum, examination requirements at least should give some clear guidance on what ought to be taught and what will be tested.

There are of course exceptions to the general lack of precision. The following is an excellent example of an attempt to be very clear and realistic:

'The first two years of English are designed to impart an initial acquaintance with the skills and concepts which constitute the basis for second-

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[1]Since revised in the country concerned.

language acquisition. This knowledge will be the starting-point to acquiring a means of communication with the rest of the world . . . These objectives will have been achieved if the pupil reaches the following attainments by the end of the second year:

1. Control of the sound system of English-consonants, consonant clusters, vowels and the major distinctions of stress and intonation . . .
2. Control of fifty-six basic grammatical structures.
3. Control of about six hundred words and phrases.
4. Knowledge of reading and writing the subject matter previously learnt aurally/orally . . .'

(The syllabus then goes on to specify the sound system, the fifty-six basic grammatical structures, and the six hundred words and phrases.)

If one takes an overall look at aims, what emerges? Apart from their deplorable verbosity, most are expressed in terms of indeterminate social skills or rather vague cultural benefits assumed to be gained through English. Since they have to be re-formulated in pedagogical and linguistic terms before planning can take place, one may reasonably enquire how far this process is possible, and in what forms. Obviously we cannot expect to teach the same skills up to the same level to all pupils everywhere. In this sense there can be no general English syllabus for world-wide use. Teaching conditions may be quite different in a number of countries, although the expressed overall aims of teaching English may look quite similar. But is agreement at any level possible about the linguistic content of what to teach, to whom, and for what purposes?

There are many variables which must condition the choice of what to teach, notably the age and background of the pupils and the ability and previous training of the teachers. These can be equipped by their training to do some things better than others. The content of what is to be taught in the schools should affect the way in which we train the teachers.

Detailed schemes of work often reflect current fashions in linguistics, and this frequently causes confusion. Perhaps it would be useful if there were an agreed method of describing the language to be taught, although such descriptions could hardly ever approach the precision of the mathematics syllabuses describing the sums to be taught or the science syllabuses describing the experiments to be conducted.

Past attempts to quantify the amount of language to be taught have often relied on lists of words—using vocabulary as the measure. The word-list is one of the oldest, most generally accepted, and in some ways least satisfactory measure. For the teaching and learning load cannot be measured simply in numbers of words. When it comes to the choice of words to put on the list, there are also difficulties. English teaching has a long history

of using word-frequency counts as a basis for the design of teaching materials—but it must be recalled that such counts have nearly always been associated with the teaching of reading rather than of speaking. The General Service list of the 1950s—based in its turn on the Interim Report on Vocabulary Selection of the 1930s and on the Thorndike word lists of the 1920s and 1930s, has been extremely valuable, especially for the design of simplified reading-materials, and there have been many other lists derived from frequency counts. All have a fundamental disadvantage if used as the basis for teaching an active skill of speaking or writing. The frequency of occurrence of words in relation to the 'whole' language (i.e. when used as a mother tongue) is not necessarily a good guide to their relative importance for the learner of a *segment* of the language. For foreign pupils are not going to learn the 'whole' language—only part of it; and that part or segment needs to be defined before it can usefully be analysed into lists of words or any other constituent item.

There may indeed be a case for a revival of work on vocabulary selection in English. (There is no doubt that the *le français fondamental* (however it was arrived at) has been most valuable to French teaching. Similar German has now its up-to-date *Grunddeutsch*. There are some valuable Russian lists, while work proceeds on a Spanish list, and an *Italiano fondamentale* is being devised. As far as English is concerned we seem to be a bit disillusioned about the value of such standard lists—perhaps because we have had experience of their shortcomings over a long period.

A few years ago it was fashionable to criticise such lists as the General Service List and to suggest that we should stop worrying about words and concentrate on structures—perhaps they should be counted so as to decide which should be taught first, or which were most useful. This was easier to say than do. There was a basic problem of finding a particular corpus of language to be analysed. Should it be the 'whole' language or the segment which lay within the potential grasp of the learner? And a more fundamental problem lay in deciding exactly what a *structure* was and whether it could in fact be identified so that it could be counted. Clearly there are many ways of defining structure: at present agreement on a definition which would be at the same time linguistically acceptable *and* useful to the teacher seems fairly remote. The impact of transformational grammar has been to make us less interested in surface structure than in deep structure. But control of surface structure is what we have overtly to teach. Teachers and course designers must decide on some inventory of grammar to teach, and no doubt during the past decade or so the most influential and useful source has been

A. S. Hornby's summary of verb patterns and sentence patterns, although little has been done to assess the relative frequency of occurrence of such patterns or, more realistically, the relative usefulness of these patterns to the learner of English and the priority to be accorded to them in teaching.

The more English is taught and the more widely it is used throughout the world, the more variants in pronunciation, intonation, stress, and so on, arise and become current. The threshold of tolerance of such variants has to be lower now perhaps than ever before (a necessary result of the geographical expansion of English). This situation may be salutary in putting pronunciation in its proper place. But it can be assumed that there is some level of minimum discrimination between phonological patterns below which communication becomes impaired, or at which extra information must be provided by syntax or lexis to compensate for a confusion of noises. So far we have little guidance about this point (beyond generous statements by the British that American English is okay or by the Americans that RP is tolerable). We certainly have very full descriptions of RP and of some forms of American English pronunciation: we do not have very useful descriptions of effective second-language varieties of English pronunciation—except in the negative form of catalogues of errors set against these criteria.

It would be clearly ridiculous to try to make everyone speak alike, but we might think a little more about how to enable learners to acquire an acceptable regional standard for production, while trying to ensure that they will comprehend *all* the varieties of spoken English which they may hear. An acceptable regional standard is far from easy to define—it cannot be invented, it must be found and described. At present we probably rely too heavily on the norm of the native speaker as a criterion. Hardly any foreign learners of English have the slightest chance of acquiring anything like native skill in English and it may be very misleading for them or their teachers to expect it.

At this point one may enquire what research is doing to aid the linguistic specification of what to teach. One answer is that we do not really know, since (a) there may be a lot of minor work going on of which we have not heard (and there is no effective international register of research into English at present), and (b) there is much basic research into the structure and description of English as a mother tongue which *may* prove valuable although not specifically designed to assist its teaching as a second language.

Of the latter kind current in Britain the Survey of Educated English continuing at University College, London is a major example. Although its long-term effect on our particular field

remains to be seen, it will provide resources from which we can select. Similarly, work at the University of Birmingham on assessing the frequency of occurrence of collocations of English words may prove valuable to the teaching of English, since it could provide us with a new category of quantifiable units for descriptive purposes—much superior to the individual word. The survey of English child language initiated by the Nuffield Foundation may also be highly relevant, if we believe that we ought to teach foreign children the same kind of English habitually used by English children (which on reflection seems a revolutionary idea). Again, however, this survey can only provide a corpus from which selection must be made, because one certainly cannot teach the whole.

For some years past there have been proposals to study and analyse the English used by teachers and pupils in the teaching of general subjects in British schools. This, it was assumed, could provide valuable guidance about the English required to be learned by children who will need it as the medium of instruction—particularly immigrant children in Britain. The results would, however, also be relevant to the needs of children in Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana, Uganda, or wherever secondary education is provided in English. A research project, to develop techniques of discourse analysis applicable to classroom English, has begun at the University of Birmingham.

It is reasonable to expect that useful research to isolate, as it were, the segments of English to be taught to foreign learners should be done outside Britain or the US. It is appropriate that the description of English used as a mother tongue should be made in the countries where it is used as such; but it might be expected that, for example, the Germans or French would be more likely than the British to select effectively the English they wish to teach in German or French schools. What is taught as a foreign language must be a selection made from the same language used as a mother-tongue. Descriptions of English as a mother-tongue may therefore be the proper task of British or American research, while the selection of items to be taught may more properly be the task of the foreigners who teach or learn it.

Coming back to the original problem of defining the linguistic content of what should be taught, and leaving aside the question of pupils' ages and motivation and the teachers' skill, it seems that there are three possible approaches, all of which have some disadvantages: (a) We can make informed assumptions about what is most useful, using such general descriptions of English as a mother-tongue as may be available and such statistical evidence about the frequency or usefulness of particular items as may be relevant. If so, we implicitly accept, to some extent,

the criterion of native proficiency. The selection of the items to be taught is largely guesswork or the result of trial and error. This is probably how most native-English teachers of English have gone to work, using their native wit, as it were, to assess what is good for the foreigner—and responding to his expressed demands.

(b) We can define situationally the range of English to teach and analyse its content from examples of its use. Thus if we aim to teach foreigners the English required when travelling, we would sample, describe, and list in some way the English used by native-English speakers when travelling. If we aim to teach English for use as a medium for learning science we would establish the English used by native-English speakers when *they* learn science. The task would be considerable but, given the techniques, rewarding. The disadvantage of this approach is that we might aim too high, for the criterion would be native-like skill—probably unattainable by most. And the problem of sampling the examples to produce a general course would require great skill and judgement. (c) We could try basing an inventory of what to teach on what it is demonstrably possible to achieve. This means abandoning the criterion of native proficiency and concentrating on teaching the kind of English already employed by those foreign learners who effectively use it as a second language. The aim would no longer be ideal but strictly practical. When deciding what should be taught in primary schools in Uganda, we should then presumably be guided by samples of good performances by Ugandan secondary-school pupils. To decide what was a realistic aim in teaching English in German secondary schools, we should study the performance of German university students or of other competent German adults. There would arise different aims and specifications for different countries, which seems entirely reasonable. The result would be not only a strong dash of realism but much disillusionment. In addition, comparisons between what proficient foreign students had found profitable and useful to learn with what linguists and teachers now think it profitable to teach would be illuminating. So far linguists have not shown great interest in analysing second-language performance in English (or, better still, competence)—being mostly concerned with mother-tongue competence and performance.

We shall probably need to use all three approaches, as to some extent we do now. It is, however, important to ensure that the expressed aims of teaching English conform with the realities of what *can* effectively be taught, for if the gap between aims and achievement is too wide to be bridged, this can only lead to frustration and bad teaching. The pupils are disappointed and the teachers overstretch themselves in the pursuit of the unattainable, and no one is satisfied.

Language and the Individual[1]

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TEACHERS ARE NEARLY ALWAYS VISUAL; that is to say, they can nearly always be seen. (I have to say 'nearly' because occasionally they are hidden behind a language laboratory console or nearly hidden behind a flannelgraph.) They are also aids; that is, their function is to teach, which I take to mean 'aiding the learner to learn'. But they are not Visual Aids. It seems necessary to say this, because certain modern-language-teaching methods, certain writers of course-materials or other educational pundits, seem sometimes to talk or behave as if the teachers were just another aid. The teacher's role is of course much more fundamental, and it seems to me to be dangerous to attempt to reduce the importance of the role, tacitly or otherwise.

The quality of modern-language teaching has improved considerably in the last thirty or forty years, and there is now on the market a wide variety of language-teaching material, often excellently planned and produced, for a large number of different countries or regions. Nearly all this material is based on what are loosely called 'modern methods' of language teaching. Provided that teachers understand, sympathise with, and are capable of using the methods which underlie this material, results can be and often are good. Only too often, however, the teachers were themselves taught by different methods and have an inadequate understanding of the reasons for teaching in an unfamiliar way. Even if sympathetic to 'modern methods', they may fail to use them adequately. Often their training may consist in simply showing them, 'training' them in the narrowest sense to use modern material, without giving them any real awareness of what 'method' or any particular method, means.

W. F. Mackey, in *Language Teaching Analysis*, lists fifteen language-teaching methods which, he says, are 'the most common types still in use'. Not everyone will agree with his classifications of method, or judgement about the commonness of their use, but that such a list can be compiled does indicate a wide choice of possible methods. Is there then a 'correct', or 'better', method of teaching language? If so, how can we recognise it? Should

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it be prescribed by some Authority? By and large, at least in so far as foreign-language teaching in Britain is concerned, such things have been left to chance, or discretion, both of which might here be synonyms for 'the individual teacher'; overseas, the situation has often been much less free. On the whole, and with some important reservations, I am wholly in favour of the teacher teaching by just whatever method suits him, but some current trends in language-teaching methods lead one to fear that this freedom, now possible here and perhaps in a lesser degree overseas, can be, perhaps unwittingly, eroded.

Before clarifying this remark, and discussing the potential erosion, the freedom must be justified, and the reservations stated. Broadly, I am taking it that what you teach and how you teach it together constitute method; I think that the 'what' part of teaching should be fairly rigorously defined according to the needs of particular students, but that 'how' (to the extent that it is not dominated by 'what') is to a high degree a variable, variability depending chiefly on the requirements and abilities of individual teachers and individual learners. Whatever the difficulties of defining 'what'—and they are many—I think this is an area where it is essential that decisions are made, even if they seem to be and perhaps in some degree are arbitrary. And although I might, in theory, prefer that such decisions should be made by the individual teacher, I recognise that for many good and practical reasons they will most often have to be made centrally. But even if the bulk of the decision-making on what is to be taught has to be decided outside the classroom, I would still maintain that the individual teacher should have some freedom in selecting from and using the 'what' component. I would, too, query just how detailed it is really desirable that any centrally written syllabus should be; the more detailed it is, the more opportunities exist for it to be inappropriate for many learners. But a syllabus has at least the virtue that the teacher is presented with something which, one hopes, will enable him to clarify the aim of his teaching.

In general terms, a language teacher is trying to impart what are sometimes called language 'skills' or 'language ability'. The acquiring of these skills, or this ability, is something that all pupils have already gone through once already, in some cases twice. And certainly on the first occasion, and possibly on the second, the pupil will have very successfully acquired this ability without a teacher. (Parents rarely regard themselves as teachers; teachers are 'them', parents are 'us'.) But the child acquired his primary language-ability far more successfully than he is ever likely to acquire any language ability again. The circumstances in which he acquired his first language were maximally favourable:

environment, motivation, relationships, maturation, everything was on the learner's side, particularly perhaps the motivation, since to learn one's mother tongue is almost a question of survival. But many factors combine to make the learning of an L2 inevitably different from the acquiring of an L1. Motivation is perhaps the main difference, but also it can be seen that, for instance, while with the L1, concepts and the language to express the concepts are learnt at much the same time—however these two are related, casually or otherwise—with the L2, most of the language has to be learnt long after the concepts have already been acquired. Again, with any language, L1 or L2, any one person's knowledge of that language will be selective, but whereas with the L1, selection of appropriate areas of the language is automatic, dictated by the environment and the language of the environment, with the L2 selection usually has to be a deliberate and calculated manoeuvre.

What is selected *must* depend, not on the whim of the teacher, or the textbook, but on the requirements of the particular learner. In the elementary stages of learning another language, it might seem that the choice is obvious, but even here it is not uncommon to find the obvious either overlooked or misunderstood, so that a child may be able to answer questions but not to ask them, or he may know a polite response but not an everyday one. A careful examination of what is relevant to any particular learner's needs is essential if language learning is to be successful. Perhaps most writers and most teachers now have an awareness of relevance, and do see the language they teach in its wider social context, but such awareness may have its own dangers. Because they look at language more widely and see it as more than a set of rules, paradigms, and word lists, because they are aware of the need to teach more than classroom language, they may be inclined to attempt too much. Or again, awareness of social context may sometimes be restricted by a too-stereotyped view of what social context is. It may not only be a question of visits to the post office, shopping for eggs, consulting a doctor, etc. It may, as for instance in the case of immigrant children in Britain, be the context of the maths lesson next period just as much as the counting of change at the grocer's; it may be the biology period tomorrow, or next term, with its structures like 'Experiment 1: To show the action of the enzyme which builds up starch from sugar in plants', just as much as the description of symptoms to the doctor.

To teach a language then, in most circumstances, demands rigorous selection. Given that someone outside the classroom makes the appropriate selection, I would suggest that a much larger part of teacher training than is customary, both here and

overseas, should be used for training students to evaluate the suitability of material for particular needs in the circumstances in which they are likely to be going to teach. Even if they are then required to use materials not of their own choice, they can use them critically and creatively. But unless teachers are trained to be critical, their teaching will continue to be dominated by someone else's judgements, and unsuitable material may be unsuitably taught. Some teachers of English who are themselves not native speakers, and are not wholly at home in the language, may prefer to rely on set materials for an analysis, at the linguistic level, of what structures are best taught in what progression. But even here, the teacher has, at least latently, a social awareness of where he is teaching, and who, and a pedagogical awareness of his learners' needs, which is often inaccessible to writers of textbooks, or, if accessible, has to be ignored because of publishers' very natural concern with wider markets. In training language teachers to be critical, one does not, of course simply set up a lot of Aunt Sallies to be knocked down, but tries to suggest to the student a set of criteria which it might be relevant for him to apply in any teaching situation, and tries to capitalise on abilities and knowledge which any teacher must have.

It is just possible that given time, resources, and manpower, someone could produce an objectively valid total description of *what* it is necessary to teach in a given situation. In spite of the fact that such descriptions are practically never attempted, it is probably still true that the combined judgement of the thoughtful syllabus-writer and the thoughtful teacher on what to teach, based on such research as has been done, is likely to have a measure of objective validity, even though it may most often have to be based on subjective impressions or on selected and selective corpuses of material. But we are a long way from being able to say that, even given time, resources, and manpower we could formulate an equally objective and equally valid description of how best to teach this material. The learning process has been, is being, no doubt will continue to be extensively studied, but it seems that we are a long way from any definitive answers, or even from thinking that there are any definitive answers. For instance, the controversy in recent years between the behaviourists and the transformationalists has highlighted how little we *know* about the processes of language acquisition. Far less energy and far fewer resources are put into a study of teaching, but even if much more was done the answers could well be even less unanimous than on learning.

The linguists have coined a word 'idiolect', which means the particular and unique use of the common stock of language by any one individual in a language community. No two people

use that common language in exactly the same way, for language is essentially individual. Very possibly too, we each have unique ways of learning or, if we are teachers, unique ways of teaching. In order to understand and be understood in our language community, our use of language has to overlap with that of others to a very considerable extent; similarly it is obvious that much of the teaching and learning processes is common to many people. But it nevertheless seems unlikely that there is any *one* way of passing on language ability. Even more important perhaps is the fact that learning strategies are almost certainly different at different stages of life. It does not seem to be common sense to suppose that the learning strategy adopted by a child of seven will be identical with that of, say, the undergraduate of eighteen or nineteen or the adult of forty. Yet there seems to be a tendency, especially perhaps in language teaching, to assume that the processes are or can be the same. If you examine recent textbooks for the teaching of a foreign language, you may notice that although vocabulary, some activities, and rate of progression differ, methods are often essentially the same whether the book is for primary-school children or for adults.

Another factor which, it has been suggested, may affect successful learning is the degree of identity which the learner is willing or able to achieve with the linguistic community using his target language. If this is so, the decision about how to teach English must surely be affected by the attitude of the learners. If identification with native English speakers is acceptable, or desirable, materials which assume a certain social 'rapport', which are relaxed and informal in tone, may be both possible and the most efficient. If, however, the identification is not with native English speakers, but, as might be the case in independent African countries, with the educated high-ranking local speakers of English, then a more formal flavour may be more conducive to effective learning. There is an interesting passage in Chinua Achebe's *No Longer At Ease*. The Secretary of the Union, which sent the hero, Obi, to England, is making a speech welcoming Obi back. The Secretary's address 'was repeatedly interrupted by cheers and the clapping of hands. What a sharp young man their Secretary was, all said. He deserved to go to England himself. He wrote the kind of English they admired, if not understood; the kind that filled the mouth, like the proverbial dry meat. Obi's English, on the other hand, was most unimpressive. He spoke *is* and *was*. He told them about the value of education . . . When he sat down the audience clapped for politeness. Mistake Number Two.' One does not want the un-understood 'proverbial dry meat', but neither does one want the disapproval, the misunderstanding, or disappointment.

Again, if the attitude cannot be one of identification with the native speaker or the educated local 'elite', but simply with some distant commercial goal and not with a person at all, then a visibly utilitarian, analytic, and precise approach may be the one to command most sympathy and therefore the most efficient learning.

The individual teacher, then, must do his best to decide, as objectively as possible, how best to teach the individual learners he is confronted with. When I said, earlier on, that I believed in the freedom of the teacher to teach as he thought best, I stipulated some reservations. One of these has perhaps become apparent—a restriction on *what* to teach, based on an objective assessment of needs. But equally important is that the teacher is fully aware of the choice that is actually his in the matter of *how*. He should, so far as is possible, understand the principles on which various materials are based, and accept or reject such principles according to his own judgement. To deny that he is capable of being trained to make such judgements is to my mind to denigrate the teaching profession. To believe that it is impossible is to believe that the majority of the teachers of the future are to be regarded as on a level with slightly superior, sympathetic, conveyor-belt operators.

Training in critical appreciation of method and teaching techniques should help to reduce the danger of teachers either reverting to old familiar methods, or of succumbing to newer, fashionable pressures. If they are aware of the rise and fall of previous fashions, and of the not infrequent resuscitation of ideas which are claimed to be new but in fact are old, then they should be in a better position to assess and critically review the materials and methods they may be asked to use. There is of course endless room for argument about the terminology used in discussing such methods; 'oral' method or 'direct' method are, for instance, terms which have almost lost meaning because they are so loosely used. Or again, one hears about 'audio-lingual' or 'audio-visual' methods. In truth, of course, neither audio-lingual nor audio-visual aids constitute a method; they are *aids*. But it is precisely here that one begins to wonder if freedom of choice, freedom to select a method, to adapt teaching to circumstances and to people, *freedom to teach*, in short, begins to be eroded.

I have said that language teachers need at least to try to be resistant to fashionable pressure. But it becomes increasingly difficult to resist such pressures in proportion to the rise of capital expenditure. One teacher, perhaps the head of the department, or his predecessor, or a director or minister of education, or a benefactor, or *somebody*, spends a lot of money on language-

teaching materials and equipment, and makes it thereby much more difficult for other teachers in the department, or for their successors, to use methods other than those dictated by the expensive equipment. If you have a set of tapes or film strips, or a language laboratory, the decision to break away from such aids becomes increasingly difficult. At the same time, the task of adapting or modifying the use of such aids to specific purposes may seem difficult or impossible for many teachers. It is relatively easy to miss a line, a paragraph, a page, or even a chapter out of a book; relatively easy to use a printed text as a kick-off point for oral work, dramatic work, intensive reading, etc., relatively easy indeed to forget the book most of the time. But the course based on audio-visual or audio-lingual aids can only too easily become a sort of juggernaut to the wheels of which teacher and pupil are inexorably tied. This *need* not necessarily be so; such courses can be modified or adapted, but for many teachers with an inadequate basis of understanding of what language-teaching methods are all about the task is both more formidable and, superficially perhaps, less necessary. It is frequently claimed that the use of such aids, and particularly the use of the language laboratory results in individualisation of language learning. This may be the theory; I have yet to see it in practice. The practical difficulties of having the right number of booths equipped with more advanced work, or of moving the learner in the middle of the session from one unit to the next, which means changing tapes etc., only too often means that in fact the whole class uses the same tape and the quick ones finish it quickly and get bored and the slow ones peg on and get discouraged, or the lazy ones spin it out—and the teacher, behind his console, has not that immediate visual reminder of boredom or of slacking. The course, the machine, can too easily take over the teacher, and the skill and talent he possesses, and which only the experience of teaching can fully develop, is lost. In the short run, the use of such pre-packed courses may be beneficial, since many courses are well planned and can probably do a better job than a partially trained and inexperienced teacher (always assuming there is a teacher who knows enough to use such courses properly), but in the long run the results can be deleterious, since room for modification and experiment is reduced.

The most efficient learning is likely to result from the greatest degree of harmony between the individual teacher's teaching strategy and the individual learner's learning strategy. Since there is, usually, one teacher, but up to thirty to forty students, it is obvious that such harmony is unlikely to be evenly spread over all the class; but the teacher, by being flexible, by appreciating individual differences, by the use of alternative methods as appro-

priate, can do his best to maximise learning. If we are to have really good language-teachers, we must equip them to assess, as rationally as possible, 'what' to teach, to appreciate many possible 'hows', and then give them the opportunity to be flexible, personal, and individualistic in their approach to the individuals in their classes.

The Advantages of Choosing RP for Teaching Purposes

R. A. CLOSE

IN HIS ADMIRABLE REVISION of H. E. Palmer's *Grammar of Spoken English*[1], Roger Kingdon substitutes the following paragraph for a passage in the original book:

1. 'There are, of course, many different styles of pronunciation in English, but for the purpose of teaching the language . . . it is advisable to choose one that is most widely useful. . . The best dialect for this purpose is probably the one that has been called Received Pronunciation. . . It is that given in Professor Daniel Jones's *English Pronouncing Dictionary*, viz. "that most usually heard in everyday speech in the families of Southern English persons whose men-folk have been educated at the great public boarding schools. . . It is probably accurate to say that a majority of those members of London society who have had a university education, use either this pronunciation or a pronunciation not differing very greatly from it." '[2]

The Introduction to the thirteenth edition, 1967, of the *English Pronouncing Dictionary* actually mentions:

2. ' . . . the families of southern English people who have been educated at the public schools . . .' and . . . 'a majority of Londoners who have had a university education . . .'[3]

and the original passage in Palmer's *Grammar of Spoken English*, 1924, runs:

3. 'The dialect taught and described in the following pages is that used in everyday conversation by the vast majority of educated speakers living south of the Trent and east of the Severn, . . . and particularly those who are

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[1]*A Grammar of Spoken English*, third edition, revised and rewritten by Roger Kingdon. Heffer, 1969.
[2]*Op. cit.*, p. xix.
[3]*Everyman's English Pronouncing Dictionary*, p. xvii, thirteenth edition. Daniel Jones. Dent.

natives of London. In pronunciation, in choice of words and expressions, and in grammatical usage, it represents faithfully the type of dialect which the author has carefully and conscientiously observed in the speech of the majority of those with whom he has generally come into contact. It is, moreover, the only spoken dialect which he feels competent to teach.'[1]

In putting forward some of the advantages of RP for teaching purposes, I would like first to consider those three quotations in the hope of removing certain misunderstandings and prejudices about it. With regard to Kingdon's wording (quotation 1), instead of 'The best dialect' I would suggest 'A very suitable dialect', omitting 'probably'. If 'best' is retained, we should specify for whom it is best. Palmer does that, in fact, in so far as he implies that it is best for *him*: it was the only spoken dialect that he felt competent to teach.

Another change that I feel is required in Kingdon's wording concerns his reference to 'men-folk educated at the great public boarding schools' and to 'members of London society'. Such references are not uncommon when RP is discussed. But they have strong overtones of privilege and exclusiveness that need be associated with RP no longer. Those overtones are much weaker in Jones's Introduction, 1967 (quotation 2): indeed, 'a majority of Londoners who have had a university education' sounds democratic enough, since there are millions of Londoners and more and more university students every year.

However, Palmer, who so often hit the nail on the head, seems to me to have done so squarely again when he spoke of those with whom he had generally come into contact. I was not educated at one of the 'great public boarding schools' (though admittedly I was born south of the Trent, attended a university, and taught at a public school); but I have spent some forty years in educational, academic, or administrative circles, either in London or in communities abroad where English has been in constant use. In the process, I have grown familiar with a kind of English which seems to have 'either this pronunciation or a pronunciation not differing greatly from it', as quotation 1 puts it. The characteristic of RP therefore seems to me to be *less* that it is the language of men-folk educated at a small group of schools—though it certainly flourishes there still—and *more* that it has become, and is being, adopted by an increasingly large number of people for whom English is a mother tongue, and even for whom it is a second language.

Furthermore, RP has been the dialect described and presented, for over half a century, in a very considerable corpus of material produced for the teaching of English as a second or foreign

[1] *A Grammar of Spoken English*, p. xxxv. Harold E. Palmer, first edition, 1914; reprinted 1930.

language. Not only is RP the sole dialect represented in many important reference books and textbooks produced in Britain over the last fifty years, but it has been used as a standard in books for the study and teaching of English produced in many other countries as well. It is quite possible that in the course of describing and particularly of teaching that dialect, linguists and textbook writers have systematised and standardised it. In that sense, it has become a form of standard English; and for that reason, I would be in favour of dropping the rather meaningless term 'Received Pronunciation' and adopting (or rather returning to) a term like 'standard English' or 'Standard British English', two characteristics of which would be (a) that it has become standardised for teaching purposes and (b) that it is becoming less and less typical of any particular geographical region or social group.

Note that I have not claimed for RP that it is *the* standard English; and that neither Palmer nor Kingdon claimed it was that. As they would have done, I find Bloomfield's references to 'the standard English of Chicago' perfectly acceptable. What I *am* saying is that because RP is so widely used and so widely useful, and because it has been so thoroughly described and has been incidentally standardised, it is *a* very suitable dialect to choose for the purpose of teaching the language.

The fact remains that RP is only one of the 'many different styles of pronunciation'. This raises two questions. First, should one choose RP rather than some other very suitable dialect? Second, if one starts with RP should one expose pupils in a normal English course to a variety of 'styles of pronunciation'?

With regard to the first question, we can only teach something that we are competent and feel competent to teach. Apart from the personal competence of the teacher, there may be several valid reasons for choosing some dialect other than RP. There are several dialects with outstanding claims, according to circumstances, especially what is known as General America. But if RP is eligible, because of the teacher's qualifications and because other circumstances make it so, then its advantages are obvious. Of all the dialects of English, RP is perhaps the one that has been most fully, clearly, and consistently described. And, compared with other dialects of English, it is in itself clearly *defined*— and has become even more clearly defined as a result of standardisation through description and teaching in recent decades. On the other hand, the characteristics of certain other dialects of English are more blurred, either because a dialect is losing some of its traditional features, or because it is in a state of development, or because of the influence of other languages (e.g. those brought into an English-speaking area by immigrants),

or even in some cases because careful habits of speech have not been cultivated. *Because* RP is relatively clearly defined and is fully described, writers of textbooks and dictionaries choose it, as a standard, to present to the learner. And the learner, if given the choice, often prefers it, as something relatively easy to hear.

Whether RP actually *is* relatively easy for the learner to hear could not, of course, be determined without proper investigation. But the preference, in my experience, of so many students for RP seems to be something more than prejudice in favour of what they imagine to be 'the Queen's English', or 'Oxford English', or the English of Eton and Harrow. I think it is partly that they find RP more intelligible than others 'styles of pronunciation'. (It is noteworthy that in answers to a questionnaire about British dialects, a group of British school-children, as reported in the press on 14 April 1970, gave first place for intelligibility to 'B.B.C. English', by which I assume they meant the English of speakers on the B.B.C. whose pronunciation is 'Received'.) In my own attempts to learn other languages, I have certainly found some dialects easier to distinguish acoustically than others, even when (as with Chinese) the sounds were very different from those of my mother tongue. Mandarin was much easier for me to *hear*, and thus to learn, than two other Chinese dialects I tried to pick up; and once the sounds of Mandarin began to mean something to me, I could begin to make sense of the other dialects. My experience was similar with Castilian and varieties of Latin American Spanish. It would therefore not surprise me if the same kind of thing applied to RP and other varieties of English.

In any case, hearing a language clearly and effectively is a vital part of the process of learning it. As a French colleague so neatly put it, *la langue parlée est la langue entendue*: the language one speaks is the language one hears. Hence the importance of clearly defined and impressively audible speech, presented to the learner either by a teacher or by an efficient electronic aid.

With regard to the question of whether to expose the learner to a variety of 'styles of pronunciation', I think the answer follows from what has already been said. The learner can hardly form a clear auditory picture of the language if he is exposed to a variety of dialects before the sounds of any one dialect have been sufficiently impressed upon him. Once he has control of the sounds of one 'widely useful' dialect, it should not be difficult for him to adapt himself to those of another. The process of adaptation should be easier, the more clearly defined is the standard from which he starts. The process need not normally be difficult. It might be so in special cases—for example, for a medical doctor for whom English is a foreign language and who finds himself

in an English-speaking area listening to patients speaking less widely used dialects or sub-standard colloquial. In such cases, special preparation may be necessary. But I am sure that, among those with whom Harold Palmer generally came into contact, there were, let us say, many distinguished Scottish and American scholars whose excellent English did not, for purposes of practical communication, differ greatly from the only spoken dialect that Palmer himself felt competent to teach.

Linguists rightly point out that much of the English they record and analyse fails to conform to RP standards. They are naturally interested in deviations from the norm. But it is a norm, a standard, that the teacher—and still more the learner—is looking for, first of all. The B.B.C. makes a special point of seeing that a variety of dialects is fairly represented in its broadcasts—but in its domestic broadcasts, for domestic reasons. The same variety does not apply to the B.B.C.'s external services: too much deviation from the norm brings complaints from overseas listeners. And the English you hear on 'English by Radio' is RP, except on the comparatively rare occasions when advanced students are given a sample of some other 'style'. Then language schools in Britain may feel it expedient to expose their students from overseas to various types of pronunciation. But the phonetic transcriptions in the reference books and textbooks they use will still, as a rule, be in RP; and, as always, the question arises, not 'What does the teacher find expedient?', but 'What does the learner want?'

Oral Expression Tests[1]: 1

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ORAL EXPRESSION TESTS are on the whole neglected, as it is impossible to treat the subject's answers objectively. Instead of arriving at a certain figure through counting a series of ticks on answer sheets, the corrector is confronted with a large number of phrases whose grammatical, lexical, phonetic, and sociocultural content has to be evaluated. The evaluation has to be simple and complete. It should be standardised according to formal criteria, so that correction is rapid and consistent

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[1]This article is based on a paper given at the Canadian Linguistics Association Congress, held at Toronto from 10 to 13 June 1969.

and can easily be explained to other correctors, who achieve the same rapidity and consistency whatever their knowledge of linguistics may be.

The term *objective* is a misleading one. It implies that the results of an objective test are in themselves objective, when in fact they are no more reliable than those of a subjective test. What is it then that makes an objective grammar test more meaningful and reliable than a subjective translation test? What does 53 per cent in an objective test mean? Interpretation of the figure 53 per cent is a subjective affair, as is the evaluation of the grammar content of a translation.

The basic differences between the objective and subjective test are not of objectivity versus subjectivity, of scientific method versus intuitive appreciation. The first difference is one of form: the way in which the question is asked, the way the answer is given and corrected. The second difference is that the objective test assesses the subject's language competence on an extremely limited number of items. The third difference is that it evaluates that competence passively, for the subject makes little or no use of the language and it is the subject's knowledge of the language that is evaluated rather than his capacity to use it. It is therefore clear that the objective test, by limiting the subject's freedom of expression, tends to become a tabulation of what the subject knows, whereas the subjective test, by allowing and encouraging the subject to express himself, evaluates the use he makes of his knowledge.

The word *participation* is a more accurate term than *subjective* and *objective*. It refers directly to the extent the subject takes part in the test, namely, the extent to which the subject speaks or writes in the language. An oral comprehension test can be either participating or non-participating. In the participating form the subject's comprehension is verified through his free response to a series of questions. In the non-participating form the subject's comprehension is verified through his selection of appropriate answers from a list of given answers after each question. The two categories, participating and non-participating, are not watertight, and from each extreme extends a whole gamut of sub-categories which indicate increasing participation by the subject. The following examples with reading and oral comprehension tests will illustrate this.

Reading comprehension

1. Zero participation:

The student reads a text. He then reads a number of questions and selects what he believes to be the most appropriate of a number of possible answers.

2. Limited participation:

The student reads a text. He then reads a number of questions and is asked to limit his answer to a certain number of words.

3. Extended participation:

The student reads a text and is asked to make a summary.

4. Complete participation:

The student reads a text and is asked to comment on the text.

Oral comprehension

1. Zero participation:

The student hears a group of sentences. He is then asked a question and selects what he believes to be the most appropriate of a number of answers.

2. Limited participation:

The student hears a group of sentences. He is then asked a question and gives his own answer.

3. Extended participation:

The student hears a group of sentences and is asked to make a summary.

4. Complete participation:

The student hears a group of sentences and is asked to comment.

The essential problem for the test designer is not so much how to evaluate what the subject says or writes but how to create a situation which will encourage him to give the maximum expression of which he is capable. The subject's response to the test situation is free and spontaneous; his production of language in the test is a representative sample of what he can produce in a variety of real situations.

Evaluation of the subject's production involves, under the respective headings of grammar, lexis, phonetics, and socioculture, four main steps: identification; description; classification; written and numerical assessment of his language competence in a group of situations. The sociocultural heading is optional and concerns the extent to which the subject is aware of the way of life of the community with which the language is associated. Linguistic theories apart, the evaluation procedure has to be simple, consistent, and communicable; it should reflect the reality of the act of communication, speaking, and writing rather than some abstract view of what this reality is; it should provide the corrector with an objective (in the proper sense of the word) statement of what the subject produced, giving precise examples

to back up or reject the interviewer's subjective impressions of the subject's fluency, and it should provide, for example, grammatical correction.

The corrector has the very great advantage of basing his evaluation on what the subject can actually do with the language. This is not so with the non-participating form, where the corrector just totals up a number of ticks and where not a word is said or written by the subject. In the non-participating form the language used in the test is selected by the test designer, not by the subject. The subject's attention is focussed by the constraint of the test on particular items chosen by the test designer. Answers to problems posed by these items are suggested by the test designer and the subject selects the most appropriate answer. There is no guarantee that his selection of correct answers in the test predicts his capacity to use correct forms in speech or in writing.

It cannot, however, be denied that non-participating form offers certain administrative advantages. Within a short period of time large numbers of subjects can be processed at an economic rate by non-specialist correctors, often with the aid of a computer.

The undeniable administrative convenience conceals complex problems of composition. There are no simple, widely accepted, easily applicable criteria as to what and which language items to include in the test, the proportion to observe between the items, the order in which the items should appear, the difficulty of the items, the number of questions, the number of words and sentences per question, the form of the answer, the administration of the test, and the validation of the test. In a grammar test it has to be decided whether the definite article will be tested or not. If it is to be tested, the test designer will have to determine how many times and in what grammatical function. When the grammatical items for testing have been selected, the designer will then have to determine the difficulty of each. It is no easy matter to determine exactly what it is that makes a question difficult, more difficult than another, and how much more difficult. The designer's task is made all the more complex by the fact that the decisions he has to make are not based purely on linguistic factors, difficult though they may be to identify and to weigh, but on the continually changing needs and character of a particular group.

This is the great drawback of the non-participating test: it is designed with a certain group of subjects in mind. Consequently it cannot be used for any other group. As the character of the group and as its need for the second or foreign language changes, and as teaching programmes change, the test will be in a constant state of revision. Should it be administered throughout a region or a country, or even beyond a country's borders, security prob-

lems oblige the test designer to have more than one version of any original. One is never sure whether the alternative version achieves the same results as the original.

Participating tests are free from these complex problems of composition. The test designer of an oral expression test is concerned only with the means by which the interviewer can best encourage the subject to speak freely and thereby get sufficient evidence of his general capacity to speak. Unlike the non-participating oral comprehension test, which indicates only how how much the subject knows of the system of the language, the participating oral expression test indicates how much of his knowledge is organised for the purpose of expression. Many students finish a course in the spoken language with high oral comprehension and poor oral expression: they speak very slowly and pause after every three to five words. This is because the knowledge they have acquired of the language is passive, organised for oral comprehension. They have a good idea of how the language system is constructed; and they have learnt this through pattern drills. But as they have not used the structures of their drills in real conversation on some motivating topic, they do not know how to speak; they can only understand.

This does not mean that non-participating tests serve little purpose. They have a very important role to play for inventory and diagnostic purposes: as the word 'inventory' suggests, the test sets out to make a complete tabulation of what the subject knows of the way the language is organised; with diagnosis, the test attempts to reject or confirm hypotheses about the subject's errors. The fact that the subject may omit the auxiliary in the structure 'he *is* coming' may be due to phonetic or grammatical factors in an oral expression test. He may have trouble in saying the contracted form; he may or may not be aware of his mistake; he may even believe that he has pronounced the contracted form. Whatever the situation may be, the diagnostic test aims at explaining the mistake, and from that explanation corrective measures can be taken.

It is important not to use the non-participating test for other purposes than those of inventory and diagnosis. The only way to know if a person can speak or write is to have him speak or write. It is even perhaps not an exaggeration to say that the best way to test a person's reading or oral comprehension is to see whether he can talk or write about what he has read or heard. Does a person really understand a text if he cannot discuss it?

(To be concluded)

Making the Most of a Textbook Passage[1]

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TEACHERS ARE NOT MASTERS of their classroom situations and are often condemned to use textbooks that are narrow-minded in their approach, badly graded, boring to the children, remote from their interests, irrelevant to their needs, with insufficient opportunities for speech-work and active participation in the lesson, and too little concerned with success for the average and slower-learning pupil. A textbook lesson that offers a reading passage, comprehension questions, and grammar exercises, and suggests topics for composition, may have been tolerable when education aimed at producing an élite minority, but is out of date and out of touch today when English is being learned in many countries by increasing numbers of 'ordinary' children, who may well be taught by very ordinary teachers.

These pupils, in both primary and secondary schools, need lesson material that is meaningful, interesting, alive, and personal, and which becomes memorable because it is made familiar in a wide variety of approaches. They need some formal controlled oral work, but also plenty of application of this in informal situations where it is really used as a means of communication; they need to find pleasure in their use of English and to laugh, which itself indicates comprehension; their reading and writing should be introduced by oral work and should often be regarded as a consolidation of the oral work; as many children as possible should be involved actively in the learning process, and here chorus-work, team-work, group-work, and pairs can play an important part and also offer a variety of treatment; both the material and its presentation and practice should be so staged that it takes account of the rate of learning of the children concerned, and gives them sufficient exposure to each new form and sufficient revision of it to ensure mastery of the basic items by even the slow learners. There should be plenty of additional practice-material, both formal exercises and informal games, cross-word puzzles, and projects to keep the quicker ones busy.

If the meaning is clear, the battle is half won; so visual and perhaps auditory aids are a necessity. The pupils should use *all* their senses in the language-learning process, their muscles, their hands, and if possible their whole bodies. Activities and

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dramatisation should therefore be regarded as 'normal' features in English-learning lessons. *See and hear, see and do, do and say, read and do, do, say and write* should be sign-posts in the developments of learning programmes.

As an example, let us take a textbook passage that involves a number of characters involved in a situation. *John is a small boy. He lives at Number 25 Main Street. He lives with his father and mother. Every morning he goes to school. His father tells him to get up. He puts on his clothes* . . . and so on. The teacher should be told, or should be able to recognise, which grammatical and lexical items are new to the class and which need revision. How can he get the meaning across of both the new items and of the situation generally? In many cases a simple drawing or series of drawings, quickly drawn and coloured with crayons or felt pens, will answer his needs and also concentrate the children's attention on the points he is making. The pictures will give him and them plenty of material for oral work, revising former material and introducing the new. Discussion of the characters involved will require the use of the third person. All this will be done without the book being used.

> *This is John. He is a small boy.*
> *Who is this? It's John.*
> *Is he a boy or a girl? He's a boy.*
> *Is he a big boy? No, he isn't. He's a small boy.*
> *He lives at Number 25 Main Street.*
> *Does he live at Number 25 Main Street? Yes, he does.*
> *Does he live at Number 26? No, he doesn't.*
> *Where does he live? He lives at Number 25 Main Street.*
> *Show me his father.*
> *Where does his father live?* and so on.

The pupils themselves, when they have become reasonably proficient in answering such questions, can ask the same ones themselves, using the pictures as reference points, and this can easily develop into a game between teams. The pupils will become increasingly involved in the game and less conscious of their use of the foreign language. After the class has had some practice in this 'controlled' situation, the teacher can ask the pupils individually whether they have experienced a similar one and what they do or did in it. This makes the subject personal and requires the use of the first and second person.

> *What's your name?*
> *Are you a boy or a girl?*
> *Are you a big boy or a small boy?*
> *Where do you live?*
> *When do you go to school?*
> *What clothes do you put on?* and so on.

The third stage could be to bring the scene to life. The teacher asks what the characters, or what the pupils themselves, would

say in a situation like this, and he thus evolves or builds up a dialogue. If he is clever, he can model the pupils' suggestions into a shape that includes the sentence patterns and language items that he wants them to practise and that they will find later in the textbook. He is now well on the way to producing a dramatisation and he can introduce further characters, if he wishes, to make the setting more real or to provide more repetitions of some of the dialogue or to involve more pupils in the activity. Fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, policemen, bus-conductors, animals, ticking clocks, a narrator, a chorus, music-makers, and so on, can be added, depending ultimately on the teacher's objectives and the time available. *Every morning John's father tells him to get up. What will his father say to him?* Suggestions come from the class, or from the teacher if necessary.

'Wake up, John. It's time to get up.'
What will John answer?
'Oh dear, what's the time?'
What will his father answer?
'It's seven o'clock. It's time to get up.'
His mother comes into the room. What does she say? 'Hurry up, John.'
What will John do when he gets up?
What clothes will he put on first?
His mother is watching him, but his father is not in the room. He cannot see what John is doing. What will he say to John's mother?
'What's John doing now?'
What will his mother say to John?
What are you doing now?
What will John answer?
I am putting on my shirt.
What will his mother say to his father?
He is putting on his shirt.

Different groups can take turns in presenting the characters in the situation, weak pupils mixed with good ones.

At the end of this stage, the children should be quite familiar with all the language involved. Now they can be introduced to the reading of it. If they are at a relatively elementary stage, this is best done using the pictures again and providing sentence-cards to be associated with them.

> This is John.

> He is a small boy.

> He lives at Number 25 Main Street.

> Every morning his father tells him to get up.

> He is putting on his shirt.

and so on.

The meaning is now clear, and reading the cards becomes more a familiarisation with the written form of the spoken words. If the pupils have all passed this stage, then they can open their textbooks and read the passage for themselves silently. *This is John. He is a small boy. He lives at Number 25 Main Street. Every morning his father tells him to get up. He gets up at seven o'clock* ... The teacher can then question them on their comprehension and give a model reading aloud to ensure accurate pronunciation. If he has mixed abilities in his class, he can group them according to their ability in reading, and some can be given longer and slower exposure, while others move on to the next stage.

The writing should reinforce what has been spoken and read. The exercises can be graded, the first one with sentence completion and a great many cues and prompts, the control gradually being removed until the last exercise is entirely free, but still reflecting the sentence patterns of the first stage. The sentences should be gone through orally first to ensure success by everyone.

(i) *This is John. J . . . . . a small boy.*
(ii) *He lives at Number 25 Main Street.*
   His father . . . . . at . . . .
(iii) *Every morning his f . . . . . tells . . . to get up.*
(iv) *E . . . . m . . . . . . he . . . . at seven o'clock.*
(v) *Now he . . putting on his shirt.*
(vi) *Now . . . . trousers.*
   And so on, leading up to free questions:
   Where does John live?
   . . . .
   When does he get up every morning?
   . . . .
   What clothes does he put on?
   . . . .

and so on, leading on to:

   Where do you live?
   . . . .
   When do you get up?
   . . . .
   What clothes do you put on?
   . . . .

Plenty of this graded writing-material, leading up as the course progresses from sentences to a paragraph to three paragraphs, which form a composition, will be needed if all the groups are to be kept busy. Individual pupils can come up and read aloud to the teacher when the opportunity allows. Alternatively, the teacher could produce a tape-recording of the passage with suitable questions, and his slowest readers could be receiving this extra instruction by themselves in one corner of the room. The pupils in a group listen to the tape, reading the passage aloud.

They can follow in their books. Each pupil sits in a place which has a number allotted to it. The tape asks comprehension questions and pauses for the answer. The other pupils check the answer given by the pupil mentioned.

Number One. What is John?
Number Two. Where does John live?
Number Three. When does he get up?

The pupils should have had a reasonable amount of pleasure from the oral work and the dramatisation, especially if different groups have vied with each other as to who can provide the most convincing performance. But the opportunity for informal language-practice has not yet been provided. So a game of some kind (see W. R. Lee's *Language-Teaching Games and Contests* for many suggestions) is important, preferably including items from the lessons, so that these get revised at the same time as many colloquial expressions are introduced and practised in the most informal and incidental way. In this case, a game of Word Bingo can be played using words from the passage on boards and repeated on small cards. The teacher or, better, a pupil reads from the card; the child, or group of children, who has the word written on his board calls out *I've got —*, and the card is passed to him, and the one who fills up his board first is the winner. The children thus hear, read, and say the words. Expressions such as:

Please pass the card to John.
Would you mind passing the card to John.
Who's got the most cards?
Who's going to be the winner?
You must be cheating!
Oh dear, I've dropped it.

and so on, become normal in the classroom, and are learned and memorised in the most natural and pleasurable way.

To go through all these stages will, of course, require a number of lessons. The textbook and the official syllabus (the 'dictators' in so many countries!) have been covered, but have not dominated the teaching. The teacher has based his classroom activities on them, but the variety of approaches he has used and the principles he has applied should ensure far greater mastery of the English language by far more children than would have prevailed under the 'traditional' system, and the teacher himself has had a much more stimulating time.

'The Play's the Thing'

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OR RATHER, to be more precise, in learning to speak English, whether as a foreign language or not, the play is not *the* thing, but merely one of the things to which we teachers have recourse. Rightly used, acting and dramatisation certainly have a valuable contribution to make to our class activities, but they can be rightly used only if they are rightly understood. It is some time now since P. Gurrey[1] wrote that the full value of acting and dramatisation has rarely been understood by teachers, and in this instance it seems to me that for once the fault lies not so much with teachers themselves, but rather with some of the over-enthusiastic advocates of this particular form of language-practice. We all have our favourite classroom activities, of course, but it seems to me that some of the more vociferous supporters of acting and dramatisation allow their enthusiasm to run away with them, even—be it said—in the pages of this journal, where not so long ago it was claimed that in addition to all else the language-teacher must transform himself into a 'consummate actor'[2].

Possibly the reason for such claims as these is to be found in the fact that advocates of the use of acting and dramatisation forget on occasion the one thing they should never forget— namely, that a classroom is a classroom and a language class a language class. Was it not because this was forgotten that we find the extraordinary claim made by contributors to the Unesco symposium on modern-language teaching that we begin our study of a foreign language with the study of mime?[3] What is the point of all this dumb show? Mime is a purely silent art and our task is to teach our pupils to speak English or whatever the foreign language is to be, not to teach them the elements of mime in their mother tongue! It may indeed be very interesting, as Lionel Billows suggests[4], to know how a tiger kills an antelope, but the important point here is that it does not speak English while doing so! The classroom, then, is not a drama school; nor, as in this instance, can drama be an end in itself. Our justification for using acting and dramatisation is that together they form

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[1] *Teaching English as a Foreign Language*. Longmans, 1955.
[2] Bender, Byron, 'Pretences in Language Teaching', *E.L.T.*, Ocober 1964.
[3] UNESCO, *Problems in Education: The Teaching of Modern Languages*, 1955.
[4] Billows, L. *The Techniques of Language Teaching*. Longmans, 1961.

the means to a very important end: an improved command of
the spoken language.

Nor, in our enthusiasm, should we confuse what can be
achieved in the classroom abroad with what can be done in the
classroom at home and elsewhere where English is the mother
tongue. In England the annual school play has a long and honour-
able tradition older than Shakespeare himself, and some of the
advantages that pupils may gain from this annual show-piece
and exercise in public relations are summed up in a passage in
The Teaching of English in England, where it is said that
'pupils who take part in the performance of plays must learn
to speak well and to move well, to appreciate character and to
express emotion becomingly, to be expansive yet restrained, to
subordinate the individual to the whole and to play the game,
to be resourceful and self-possessed, and to overcome or mitigate
personal disabilities'[1]. Of the advantages listed above, the one
that concerns us most is that through acting our pupils learn to
speak well. To teach them to do this is our primary aim: all
else is of secondary importance.

Language is a form of behaviour—'the reaction' in Michael
West's words, 'of the organism as a whole to a social environ-
ment'. Posture, facial expression, and gesture admittedly also
play their part and students of acting, rightly, are particularly
interested in them. But one wonders, as far as students of languages
are concerned, whether these aspects are not sometimes unduly
emphasised at the expense of attention, say, to pace, pitch, and
volume, which I believe to be far more important. There is no
doubt that we use gesture, but can we really agree with Dr R. L.
Saitz, when he maintains that a knowledge of gesture 'is as im-
portant as work on linguistic patterns, *if not more so*'[2] (my italics).
Doubtless correctness of speech and correctness of behaviour—
intonation and gesture—are closely related, but I am certain
that correct intonation is more important than appropriate
gesture and it is to the former that we should give our main
attention. Strangely enough, it is here that the publishers of
textbooks for students of English as a foreign language are
generally unhelpful. For it is not enough that an edition of a
play tells our students *what* to say: it must also give clear and
consistent directions as to *how* to say it. For teachers the stage
direction is far less important than what I call the *speech direction*,
and the students who have been given these, and can appreciate
and perform Patrick Hamilton's *This is Impossible!* or Malvolio's

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[1]Quoted by Frisby, A. W. in *Teaching English. Notes and Comments on
Teaching English Overseas*. Longmans, 1957.

[2]Saitz, R. L.: '*Gestures in the Language Classroom*', *E.L.T.*, October 1966.

virtuoso solo *What employment have we here—?*, for example, have very little more to learn about the intonation of English.

Language, we repeat, is a form of behaviour, and the native learner finds himself in many and varied environments as he gradually attains his mastery of it. Our own pupils, however, are often only too conscious of the classroom walls which confine them, just as we ourselves are aware that the classroom alone provides an inadequate environment for language learning. Acting and dramatisation — make-believe — give us precisely that opportunity we need of throwing open the doors leading to the world outside, the world where language really is used for communication—in shops, in offices, in the streets, and on railway platforms. We can pretend that we are no longer pupils and teachers confined within the too solid walls of the classroom but ticket-collectors, shopkeepers, and their customers, busconductors and passengers, doctors and patients, and so on. As D. Y. Morgan pointed out in this journal[1], this kind of make-believe is essential to the meaningful practice of an adequate range of language in the classroom, and the earlier we use it the better. One great advantage we have when teaching younger pupils is that they will readily accept all this—you name it, and they will pretend to be it! Older pupils cannot be expected to react in the same way, nor indeed, do many of them do so: they have not only 'put away childish things', but they are also often very conscious of the fact that they have lost the child's unique facility for acquiring a new set of speech habits. One should not be surprised, then, if their approach to acting and dramatisation is not the same eager, unselfconscious one of the younger learner. However, if a tradition of learning English in this way has been established early they are much more likely to enjoy it than if it is sprung on them unexpectedly.

It remains to consider briefly what materials can be used for the purpose of acting and dramatisation in the classroom. The social occasions which form the core of so many lessons in our textbooks, for instance, offer dialogue enough—either tailor-made by the author, or easily derived from the text. From these we can proceed to a form of pattern practice based on similar occasions and analogous use of language and, in due course, to verse, dramatic narratives, and traditional tales. What is chosen, and how much is chosen, will naturally depend upon the standard of English of the pupils concerned and the amount of time available for this form of language practice. What is also important, however, is that it must be a poem or tale which gives our pupils adequate opportunity for speaking—not one which is all stage-

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[1]Morgan, D. Y.: 'Games and Play-acting' in *E.L.T.*, January 1967.

set and atmosphere, or which involves lengthy commentary by the teacher and very little speaking by the pupils. A comparison, say, of Byron's *Vision of Belshazzar* with the ballad of *King John and the Abbot* will illustrate this point. Ballads, with their terse dialogue and vivid action, have indeed much to offer, and there is a mine of materials in such a collection as Robert Graves's *English and Scottish Ballads* (Heinemann, 1957), even if we leave aside those which present dialect difficulties.

And from such beginnings we come at last to plays. We have not the whole range of English drama at our disposal, for such considerations as number and age of pupils must obviously affect our choice of material: whether it is to be, for instance, Ted Willis's *The Long and the Short and the Tall*, or John Drink-water's beautiful evocative $X = O$. Our task is not made any easier by the fact that there is a dearth of good one-act or short plays, and for this reason self-contained excerpts from longer works are an attractive alternative—and they are generally of a much higher value as literature. The quarrel scenes from *The School for Scandal*, the proposal scene from Act I of *The Impor-tance of Being Earnest* followed by Lady Bracknell's interrogation of Jack Worthing, Galatea's awakening from W. S. Gilbert's sadly neglected *Pygmalion and Galatea*—to name only the most obvious. And finally, of course, Shakespeare. The excellent selection offered by Lionel Gough in his *Tragical, Comical, Historical, Pastoral* (Edward Arnold, 1959) represents only the tip of the iceberg, as any teacher armed with a copy of the com-plete works and perseverance will soon find out. Having done so, and made a suitable choice of excerpts, he can turn to A. E. Hudson's *Shakespeare in the Classroom* (Heinemann, 1960, 2nd edition), compiled for the Society for Teachers of English, and the series of recordings issued by the Argo Record Company in association with the British Council, which will give him much practical help in the task of translating the printed page into living speech. It is a demanding task but a rewarding one for the teacher of English.

Puppets in Teaching English

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THERE ARE WITHOUT DOUBT a vast number of audio-visual aids to the teaching of English as a second language. My main purpose here, however, is to recommend the use of puppets as an excellent audio-visual aid in the English class.

We can construct these puppets very easily. To make a papier-mâché puppet we need flour, water, and salt in order to prepare a paste with the consistency of thick soup. Then we prepare a head shape of plasticine, covered with a very thin coat of vaseline, and place it over a stand, which can be a bottle. We cover the head with strips of newspaper, putting on at least four coats. We can accentuate features by pinching the papier-mâché. Then we dry this in the sun for forty-eight hours and afterwards paint it. Finally we make hair from yarn or wool and glue it in place.

To construct a paper puppet, we need a handkerchief or cloth with three holes. The head can be made of kitchen towel-roll paper, and we put inside it a roll of paper to fit our fingers, fastening this with tape. We can cover the head with crêpe paper if we want to give it the colour of skin. Then we can glue on or draw on the eyes, nose, and mouth. These can be pieces of coloured paper. The first finger goes into the middle hole to move the head, while the thumb and the middle finger go into the other two holes to move the arms.

Later, when these puppets are dressed up and given certain characteristics, we can use them for the teaching of an English class. These small creatures will add variety to the lesson and will make it different from those taught with textbooks only. There are many ways in which we can use puppets. Here are some of them.

1. To teach greetings

It is necessary to teach greetings because they are used in every country of the world as a mode of communication. A puppet can appear on stage waving his hand and saying: 'Hello, friends. How are you today?' And the students, moved by this friendliness, can answer: 'Very well, thank you, and you?' Greetings can also be taught through short dialogues, e.g.:

Harry: Hello Mary, how are you today?
Mary: Very well, thank you, and you?
Harry: Fine, thank you.

Janice: Hello Judy, this is my friend Louis.
Judy: How do you do?
Louis: How do you do? I'm very glad to meet you.

2. To teach prepositions

This can be done with the help of a story or a game. Thus:

Harriet: I've lost my watch. And I am sure you have it.
Joe: Who? Me? I don't have it.
Harriet: You have it *under* your coat.
Joe: No, I saw it *in* Meg's drawer. You must go *into* her bedroom.
Harriet (in the bedroom): Here it is, but *on* the table.
Joe: Harriet, have you found it?
Harriet: Yes, but it wasn't *in* the drawer, it was *on* the table.

In this case two puppets, one called Joe and the other Harriet, appear on stage. When Harriet says 'You have it under your coat', she lifts up Joe's coat as if searching for it. Joe cries 'No', and she moves back. Everytime they indicate a place they have to move their hands to indicate it.

Prepositions can also be taught by playing a game. This can be done by hiding something, for example an eraser. The teacher then says: 'I have lost the eraser. Who can find it?'

Student: Is it *on* the table?
Puppet: No, you're cold.
Student: Is it *behind* the desk?
Puppet: Oh no, you're cold.
Student: Is it *in* the drawer?
Puppet: No, no, you're cold.
Student: Is it *near* the chair?
Puppet: You're less cold.
Student: Is it *on* the chair?
Puppet: You're warmer.
Student: Is it *under* the chair?
Puppet: You are hot, very hot, and you win.

The children ask, and the teacher (the puppet) answers according to the prepositions used and according to the place where the object is hidden: 'Oh, no, you are cold, you are less cold, you are warmer, you are hot, you are very hot, and you win.' The winner is the next one in charge of hiding some object and of manipulating the puppet. This kind of game needs a lot of enthusiasm and good places to hide the objects, so that the game will be more exciting.

3. To teach comparatives and superlatives

With a little imagination we can teach adjectives also. Suppose that two puppets are on the stage. One is tall and the other short, one is fat and the other thin, one old and the other young, and so on. If we want to teach the comparative and superlative adjec-

tives we can use a dialogue where they talk about themselves.
For example:

> Tony: Hello John. How are you? (They shake hands.)
> John: Very well, thank you. And you?
> Tony: I'm fine. But now you look *older* than me.
> John: Do you remember when I looked *younger* than you?
> Tony: Yes, I do. But now you look *fatter* than ever.
> John: That's true. But you look *thinner*.
> Tony: That's because I'm *taller* than you.
> John: I don't know how you can be *taller* when your father is *shorter* than mine.
> Tony: And I don't know how you can be the *slowest* boy in the world when your father is the *smartest* man in the city.
> (They leave the stage, very angry.)

4. To dramatise dialogues

Many dialogues can be dramatised with the help of puppets.
Puppets are especially good for this purpose. With dialogues
we can teach an amazing number of things, e.g. pronunciation,
intonation, the time of day, activities at various times of the day,
vacation activities, the main meals, clothes to wear, the rooms
of the house, professions and occupations. With their help we
can also give emphasis to grammar and vocabulary. The first
thing to do is to teach the dialogue through oral repetition;
then we can dramatise it using puppets. Each puppet will represent
a character. For example, the following dialogues are used to
teach the time of day, various activities, and the main meals:

> Marita: What time do you get up in the morning?
> Hector: I get up at seven o'clock.
> Marita: What time do you have your breakfast?
> Hector: I have my breakfast at 7.30.
> Marita: What time do you go to school?
> Hector: I go to school at eight o'clock.
> Marita: What time do you have lunch?
> Hector: I have lunch at twelve o'clock.
> Marita: What time do you have dinner?
> Hector: I have dinner at 7.30 in the evening.
> Marita: What time do you go to bed?
> Hector: I go to bed at nine.

> Paul: I haven't seen you since the July vacation.
> Peter: I've been to Los Angeles to visit my friend.
> Paul: Did you visit Disneyland?
> Peter: Yes, I had a very good time there.

> Renzo: What did you have for dinner today.
> Laura: Potatoes.
> Renzo: What else?
> Laura: Vegetables and fruit.
> Renzo: I prefer to eat steak or chicken.
> Laura: Do you like spaghetti?
> Renzo: Of course, I'm Italian.

5. In games

There are many games which can be adapted to puppetry. This one, for example, is used to teach colours, animals, and fruit. This is a game which can be played by two puppets and a row of children. One of the puppets represents the good angel and the other one the bad angel. Every child selects a colour, an animal, or a fruit from a list given and according to what they are asked for.

Angel: Knock, knock, knock.
Class: Who is knocking at the door?
Angel: The Angel with the Golden Star.
Class: What do you want?
Angel: A colour.
Class: What colour?
Angel: Blue.
      (If there is a child with that colour, he goes out to the side of the good angel. Then the bad angel enters.)
Angel: Knock, knock, knock.
Class: Who is knocking at the door?
Angel: The Angel with the Pitchfork.
Class: What do you want?
Angel: A colour.
Class: What colour?
Angel: Red.
      (If there is a child with that colour, he goes out to the side of the bad angel.)

At the end of the game, when everybody is on the side of one angel or the other, there is a tug-of-war to see which side wins.

A very useful counting-game is the one called 'Count Noses'. This is a counting-game for two puppeteers to play with their peanut puppets, which are made of peanut-shell halves. We need to draw the eyes, nose, and mouth on the shells and fit them on the tips of our fingers. Both puppeteers hide their puppets below the table. At a signal ('one, two, three') each one shows on the stage as many peanut puppets as he wishes. Each player tries to be the first to call out the correct number of all the puppets on stage.

6. To present facts about nutrition[1]

Here is a way of informing young people about vitamins.

Announcer: Here comes a good fellow. Let's see who he is?
Vitamin A (entering): I am vitamin A. I live in carrots, sweet potatoes, cabbages, peas, green beans, many of the yellow and green vegetables, and fruit. I also live in milk, eggs, and dairy produce. You must eat lots of me.

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[1]Batchelder, Marjorie, and Comer, Virginia Lee, *Puppets and Plays*, pp. 119–20. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956.

Announcer: And here comes someone you all know.

Vitamin C (who enters laughing and dancing in a joyful manner): Hello, friends! I live in oranges, lemons, and grapefruit. Vitamin C is my name.

Announcer: It's fine to have a good friend here. But who is this stranger coming in now? (To a fish entering.) Who are you?

Vitamin D (shyly): You don't see me very often, but I'm terribly important to your health. You must bring me from the sea, in sardines, tuna fish, etc.

7. In rhythm studies[1]

Children are delighted with rhythmic movement, and puppetry is one way of satisfying this interest. Small groups of children stand behind a curtain and move their hands rhythmically in time with music. Cut-out letters can be used to form words. In this way the children learn vocabulary, because when they see these letters and the strange dance, they will want to know the meaning. (For example: 'Fun is threatened by the umbrella. To the rescue comes the sun.' The music can be a polka.)

8. In 'biographies'

It is a good thing to act out someone's life. This person can be linked to history, literature, geography, etc. The facts are ready and the only thing we need to do is to select them to make an interesting story. Then the narrator reads the biography, while the puppets act their part. This saves time, because it is unnecessary to wait until the operators have learned the words. Rehearsal is necessary to make the reader and the operator familiar with movement and rhythm. To reinforce comprehension the teacher can give this performance as many times as she wishes.

9. In sketches[2]

This is good for teaching common expressions such as *Have you seen* ——?; *Call him, please*; *Where is he? He has gone*; *Has he gone?*; *Come back*; *The fight is starting*; *The children must see whether*; *we play the game well*; *Do they know the rules?*; *If I hit you*; *You fall over*; *I have to count*; *You have to count*; *I've won*; *Let's start*; *Say Go*; *He's up again*; *No, you haven't*; *Yes, I have*; *You didn't count up to* ——; *I did*; *I said*; *Is that right?*; *Next time you count*; *I've knocked him down*; *Count, children*; *Me too*. The students have to learn these phrases, then the dialogue, and after that they can dramatise it. We need two puppets.

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 190.

[2] Jones, Josephine M. *Glove Puppetry*, pp. 38–9. London: The English Universities Press, 1957.

(Enter red puppet with yellow gloves on.)
Ted: *Have you seen Tom? Call him, please.*
Children: Tom!
(Enter Tom without gloves. Ted runs out.)
Tom: *Have you seen Ted? Where is he?*
Children: *He has gone.*
Tom: *Call him, please.*
(Tom hides.)
Children: Ted!
Ted: *Has he gone?* (entering).
Tom: No! (jumping out).
Ted: Help! (runs out).
Tom: *The fight is starting. Come back!*
Ted: *The children must see whether we play the game well.*
Tom: *Do they know the rules?*
Ted: Yes.
Tom: *If I hit you* and *you fall over, I have to count* up to ten. And then
            I have won.
Ted: And *if I hit you?*
Tom: Then *you have to count* up to ten.
Ted: *Let's start.*
Tom: Now children, *say Go.*
Children: Go!
(They fight, and Tom knocks Ted down.)
Tom: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5! *Oh, he's up again!*
(They fight, and Ted knocks Tom down.)
Ted: 1, 6, 8, 10! *I've won!*
Tom: *No, you haven't.*
Ted: *Yes, I have.*
Tom: *You didn't count up to ten* correctly.
Ted: *I did, I said:* 1, 6, 8, 10.
Tom: *Is that right,* children?
Children: No.
Tom: *Next time, you count.*
(They fight and both fall down.)
Tom (raising his head): *I've knocked him down. Count, children.*
(The children count to ten.)
Tom: Hurrah! *I've won!*
Ted: *Me too.*
(Both clap hands and go.)

As you see, it is possible to use puppets as teaching tools,
but over-use makes them dull tools and a puppet can become no
more interesting than a blackboard.

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Graded Practice in Advanced Listening Comprehension

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THREE MAJOR AREAS in which listening comprehension practice may be graded are: 1. the type of comprehension exercise, 2. the type of material selected, 3. the subject-matter of the material. Progressive grading involves simultaneous advancement in each of these three areas.

1. Type of exercise

Whatever the type, it is desirable that the exercises should help increase comprehension of the whole passage and be based on important points rather than on irrelevant details.

1.1 *True/false exercises* ('Mark these statements as true (T) or false (F)') are a straightforward type of exercise suitable for early sessions. The task before the student is simply to verify what was actually said in the passage. Appropriate exercises can cover all the major points of the passage and in this way assist comprehension of the whole.

1.2 *Yes/no questions* ('Answer Yes or No to these questions') are a variation of the true/false type. They add variety to the answer sheet and allow two sets of questions to follow through the main ideas of the passage. In any set of questions it assists comprehension if the order of presentation follows the passage.

1.3 *Fill the blanks* ('Supply the missing words in these sentences'). This type of exercise aims at recognition of sounds rather than comprehension of content, but it can assist comprehension by directing the student's attention to key words and phrases that he may not have heard accurately and that are essential for the comprehension of the whole.

1.4 An extension of the true/false type to the three alternatives *true/false/not-stated* ('Mark the following as true (T), false (F) or not-stated (NS)') introduces a new order of difficulty. Exercises that require the student to state what was *not* said force him to review the entire material.

1.5 *Classify-by-concept* exercises give the student four or five abstract terms to work with in classifying ten or more sentences, either taken from the passage or relating to it. If the aim is to develop ability to see the passage as a meaningful whole, the

concepts chosen for the exercise need to be those that play a meaningful role in the passage. The simpler form of exercise presents actual sentences of the text to be classified; a more sophisticated form presents statements that are a consequence of the text or that are a valid interpretation of the text. Overlapping concepts are a problem here, as it is often difficult to find abstract terms with clear borders in terms of the text. Obviously not every text is suitable material for this type of exercise.

A talk on the human factor in politics. Classify these statements under the concepts *acquisitiveness*, *rivalry*, *vanity*, and *love of power*:
1. Some people enjoy seeing public accounts of their worst acts. (vanity)
2. I don't care if I lose too, I want to see *you* lose. (rivalry)

1.6 *Correct/incorrect inferences.* These exercises require critical interpretation of the text. At the stage when he can cope with exercises of this type, the student must have developed his capacity to understand what the text *says* to the point where he can judge what it *implies*. This is consequently one of the most difficult exercises in listening comprehension. Clear directions are needed to ensure that the student looks for inferences that are correct or incorrect in terms of the text rather than statements that are true or false in the light of his own experience.

A talk on cultural anthropology. Mark as correct (C) or incorrect (I) the inferences that can or cannot be drawn from the remarks on the change from a hunting culture to an agricultural culture:
1. This development explains much of man's creative activity. (C)
2. Aggressive behaviour may have its origin in the mentality of the primitive hunter. (I)

1.7 *Multiple-choice questions* allow the greatest possibility for variety. They are adaptable to texts of all kinds and can be pitched at all levels of sophistication and difficulty. This flexibility makes listening comprehension, as questions of varied types can require the student to exercise in the one session all the listening skills he has developed. These skills may be grouped into five areas, to each of which corresponds a specific type of multiple-choice question: (a) comprehending factual content, (b) inference, (c) interpretation of the speaker's intention, (d) interpretation of emotive and figurative language, (e) taking an overall view of the entire passage.

1.7.1 *Comprehending factual content.* Multiple-choice questions here are an extension of the true/false/not-stated type. Great variety of formulation is possible, e.g. 'What is the reason for . . .', 'Which of the following is an example of . . .', '. . . is important because ——', 'What is meant by . . .', 'When the speaker says . . . , he is referring to ——'.

A particularly useful formulation is the negative one. 'Which of these features is *not* mentioned?' or 'Which of these is *not* an example of . . .'. This formulation forces the student to review the whole passage.

A discussion on the emotional development of the child.
1. 'His parents are the safe people.' This comment refers to the child's fear.
a. of falling.
b. of the dark.
c. of being alone.

1.7.2 *Inference*. Like the simpler exercise described in 1.6, multiple-choice inference questions take the student away from what is stated in the text and require him to appraise the consequences of the speaker's statements, as well as to take a critical look at the speaker's point of view. Possible formulations are: 'You would infer that the most important factor in . . . is——', 'It can be inferred from the passage on . . . that ——', 'You would infer that the speaker believes that ——', 'Which of the following is a consequence of . . .?'

A discussion on creative writing.
1. You would infer that the principal reason the first author writes on index cards is

a. to save time.
b. to be free to change what he has written.
c. to capture the inspiration of the moment.

1.7.3 *Interpretation of the speaker's intention*. Exercises in this area accustom the student to asking himself such questions as: Why is the speaker emphasising this?, What does he imply by this remark?, What is his motivation in making this point?; or simply: What *is* the point? Some useful formulations are: 'What is the point of the passage about . . .?', 'The account of . . . is presented in order to show (emphasise) ——', 'The speaker mentions . . . chiefly in order to ——', 'The speaker's attitude towards . . . appears to be ——'.

The Yellow Bird, a story by Tennessee Williams.

1. The author's attitude towards strict believers is apparently
a. detached.
b. amused but sympathetic.
c. satirical.

1.7.4 *Interpretation of emotive and figurative language*. Aspects of the emotive use of language where comprehension skills can be developed include rhetorical and stylistic devices, emotive symbols, emotive tags and the expression of bias, persuasion, under- and over-statement, implied moral judgements, implied favourable and unfavourable attitudes. This is an area where

literary selections (particularly plays), humour, and such items as political speeches and discussions, advertising and propaganda are useful material.

Formulations like the following lead the student to consider aspects of emotive speech he might otherwise pass over: 'What feeling (attitude) on the part of the speaker is implied by the word (words)...?', 'Which of these comments is the most favourable (damaging)?', 'Why does the speaker choose the word ... to refer to ...?', 'Why does he say ... and not simply ...?', 'What is suggested by the expression ...?'.

Other exercises may induce a critical appraisal of emotive language in the whole selection.

Bliss, a short story by Katherine Mansfield.
1. Does Bertha's language ('modern, thrilling friends', etc.) reveal anything about the author's attitude towards her?
a. The attitude is one of gentle irony.
b. It is the language of the author herself and her time (the 1920s).
c. The intention is to make Bertha seem ridiculous.

Humour, particularly the pun, is notoriously difficult even for the advanced student. Comprehension of such items can be assisted by the way the question is formulated. A simple method is to give one of the two meanings on which a pun is based and ask for the other meaning to be chosen from three or four alternatives, e.g. 'One meaning of . . . is . . . What other meaning is suggested here?'

Figurative language presents similar difficulties. In cases of intended ambiguity (metaphor, paradox), a treatment similar to that outlined for puns is possible, e.g. 'The usual meaning of . . . is . . . What other interpretation is suggested here?'

To assist and develop comprehension of symbolic language—in material such as poetry or a short story—possible interpretations of symbols can be listed in the multiple-choice items.

Bliss.
1. What does the pear tree appear to symbolise?
a. Bertha's feeling of affinity with Miss Fulton.
b. Bertha's ecstasy.
c. Bertha's heightened love for her husband.

1.7.5 *Developing an overall view of the entire passage*. Questions aimed at developing this comprehension skill draw attention either to the significance of parts of the passage in the context of the whole or to important points made by the passage as a whole. Some suggested formulations: 'Why is ... significant in the discussion of ...', 'What seems to be the most important reason for (point about, factor in) ...?', 'How would you describe the section on ...?', 'What would be a suitable heading

for the section on ...?', 'What would be a good alternative title for the programme?', 'The whole programme emphasises ——', 'Which of the following is the best précis of the passage?'.

A programme on language.
1. The whole programme emphasises.
a. the diversity of the world's languages.
b. the mutual involvement of language and culture.
c. the role of language in shaping our thinking.

2. Type of Material

Variables useful in the grading of material include standard/non-standard pronunciation, standard/non-standard/dialect, simplified/impromptu/prepared speech, one speaker/many speakers. A systematisation of these variables follows.

2.1 *Introductory material:*

(a) *Simplified material, standard pronunciation.* Extremely useful simplifications are those written for school children in the early years of secondary education in the country of the target language. The merit of these texts is that they are frequently written in the language of a teacher talking to a child and thus preserve characteristics of the spoken language. Examples include textbooks introducing such subjects as biology, psychology, and civics, and especially those textbooks that take 'the world around us' as the subject-matter of first-language instruction.

(b) *Impromptu speech, standard pronunciation.* In spite of its characteristic grammatical inconsistencies, impromptu speech is much easier as comprehension material than prepared speech. The reason for this is the redundancy of most impromptu speech and the slower rate of delivery, including spaces (uhm, er), compared to prepared speech. A source of such material is a native speaker talking impromptu on a subject familiar to him. Halting delivery, ample redundancy, and frequent spaces—features of the living spoken language—are not reasons for disregarding this type of material.

2.2. *Intermediate material:*

(a) *Prepared ('considered') speech, standard pronunciation.* An example of this speech model is the radio talk, where the illusion of delivery suggests talking as opposed to reading and the elaborate constructions of the written language are avoided.

(b) *Impromptu speech, non-standard pronunciation.* Non-standard pronunciations can be a major obstacle to comprehension, but a listening skill limited to comprehension of standard speech only may not be adequate at advanced level.

(c) *Impromptu discussion at a low level of abstraction or special-isation*. The feature of these discussions that contributes an additional element of difficulty is simultaneous speech by several speakers—a formidable difficulty, but fully characteristic of social speech behaviour. To cope with such discussions at a specialised level requires outstanding comprehension ability.

2.3 *Difficult material:*

(a) *Carefully prepared speech*. Any oral material with character-istics of the written language, such as refined choice of vocabulary and elaborate sentence or paragraph structure, can be extremely difficult to fully comprehend aurally. Why should such material be used at all in listening comprehension programmes? Two important reasons are: (a) that the written language *is* presented orally in actual situations; commonly, for instance, in the lecture-room, (b) that this material presents some uniquely difficult problems to the advanced student who wishes to extend his listening skills to the utmost. Some varieties of carefully prepared speech that are useful as comprehension material are humour (solo comedians, family comedy, cabaret songs), university lectures ('University of the Air' radio programmes) and the whole range of literary selections (plays, short stories, literary essays, extracts from novels, and poetry). Poetry deserves special atten-tion, partly because of the demands that its intense language makes on the foreign-language student, and partly because it *requires* oral presentation for its full effect.

(b) *Speech in non-standard dialects*

(c) *Impromptu discussion with a high level of abstraction or specialisation.*

3. Subject-matter

Three broad gradations of subject matter and vocabulary range are suggested:

3.1. *Introductory: materials relating to common experience* (e.g. biographical and especially autobiographical material, as-pects of daily life, current affairs, the news).

3.2 *Intermediate: popularisations of specialist material* (where specialist terminology is avoided through judicious paraphrase, e.g. psychology broadcasts for the average listener). Part of advanced language-learning is learning *in* the language concerned, and programmes of this kind can present a succession of areas of experience unfamiliar to the student in the target language.

3.3 *Difficult: specialist material*. The language of the specialist, even in speech, differs markedly from that of popularisations,

notably in such features as concision, rapid transition, allusion, and the array of specialist clichés. Good comprehension of this style of speech may be of practical importance to the advanced student.

4. Programme length

A final variable in grading comprehension practice is length of selection. For early sessions with students who have had little contact with connected passages of the spoken language, five minutes is a desirable length. In the language laboratory this means that the total programme can be heard approximately four times, allowing for time spent in listening for detail and working with the answer sheet. This can rapidly progress to ten minutes, as listening for detail becomes less onerous. At any level there should be an opportunity to hear the total programme three times (listening, attempting the exercises, and review). This makes fifteen minutes a maximum length, except when attention is being directed exclusively to the overview of a larger selection (e.g. a long narrative programme).

5. Presentation of listening comprehension programmes

5.1. *Written or oral answers?* This question is relevant only in the language laboratory, where it is possible to combine comprehension work with speaking practice, the student answering questions on to his tape and hearing model answers after his attempt. There are two objections to this procedure: (a) there is no incitement for further listening to the programme—after hearing the model answers, the student's effort is at an end, (b) the individual's listening comprehension skill can be developed enormously beyond the range of his speaking skill. The aim of attaining effective comprehension of large areas of the spoken language will be hampered by linking exercises in listening comprehension with speaking practice.

5.2. *Self-assessment or testing?* The lay-out of a listening-comprehension answer-sheet for the type of exercises suggested in part I of this article looks like a test. In fact, however, the aims of testing procedures and skill-developing exercises in this area conflict in at least one important respect. If sessions are carefully graded in progressive difficulty, it should be possible for the best students to consistently score 100 per cent, and this score, representing *satisfactory* comprehension, should be each student's aim. If the bulk of the class score between 80 and 100 per cent, the range of marks is useless for testing purposes. For self-assessment, however, this is a fair result. The student who manages to get consistently high scores, perceiving that the exercises,

material and subject-matter are becoming progressively more difficult, has some awareness of his developing skill. The teacher can keep in touch with the progress of the class either informally or by marking a session at regular intervals.

5.3 *Entertainment aspects*. With the great range of experience covered by its material, listening comprehension can be among the most varied and interesting work the language student does. The aspect of intrinsic interest and occasionally entertainment can be cultivated by teachers who seek active student participation. An interesting detail here is the use of music to introduce, break up, and round off programmes, particularly in the language laboratory, which is not an attractive working environment to all students. Another suggestion is the end-of-term entertainment programme: an anthology of humour, oddity, song, etc., with comprehension exercises featuring some degree of lightness or wit.

A Technique for Measuring Reading Comprehension and Readability

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CLOZE PROCEDURE is a testing technique that has excited much interest and research activity with English as a first language. Strangely, there have been only a few studies where the technique has been used with students for whom English is a second or foreign language (Carroll *et al.*, 1959; Friedman, 1964; and Gregory-Panopoulos, 1966). The purpose of the present paper is to describe briefly the rationale of cloze procedure as a measure of reading comprehension and of readability and to outline the steps necessary to construct cloze tests for use in the classroom. A second paper will present the experimental findings of a study carried out in Papua and New Guinea.

Stated simply, cloze procedure consists of a set of rules for constructing cloze tests over samples of written materials, administering these tests to subjects and scoring them, and determining from the cloze scores the degree of comprehension of the written materials. To construct a cloze test the words of a passage are systematically deleted in some mechanical way and replaced by blanks, usually of a standard length. (However, recent work carried out by the author has shown that blanks of the same

length as the word deleted work well.) The subject's task is to replace the missing words, and his score, the number of words he correctly replaces, is an index of his comprehension of the passage. Viewed in another way, his score represents the reading difficulty of the passage for him. The following is an example of a cloze test.
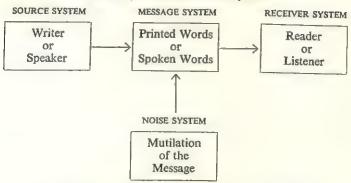
> The idea that the   of a language, unlike   words, are probably infinite   number, so that they   be listed, is no   one, however familiar it   recently have become through   writings of Chomsky and   followers.

In this passage every fifth word has been deleted and replaced by a blank ten spaces in length.

An often-quoted rationale of cloze procedure is that there is a tendency to close broken language-patterns in the same way that most people see an incomplete circle or triangle without any breaks or discontinuation. In fact, Taylor (1953), who introduced the technique, explained his choice of the term 'cloze' in terms of the Gestalt principle of closure. However attractive this explanation may be, there is little empirical evidence to support it.

A Model for the Language Correspondence of a
Source System to a Receiver System

A more defensible rationale seems to be that based on the generalised communication model devised by the communication engineers in their work with signal transmission. A modification of this model that is more suited to language communication is shown above. According to the language communication model in the figure the transmission and receiving of a message are seen essentially as coding operations. The source or encoder, the writer or author, produces a message, a passage of printed English. Noise, which in the present context consists of mutilation of the language patterns of the message, interrupts the coded

message before it is received by the decoder or reader. To decode the message, cloze procedure requires the reader to construct the mutilated language-patterns by making the most likely replacement in the light of his language system and the grammatical and semantic cues that are available.

If reading comprehension is defined as the correspondence between the semantic and grammatical habit-systems of encoders and decoders using the same language, then it can be seen that cloze procedure taps this correspondence and thus indexes reading comprehension. Reading comprehension is therefore defined operationally.

There is support from linguistics for cloze procedure as a measure of reading comprehension. Fries (1963) identified three layers of language meanings: the layer of meanings carried by the grammatical structures, the layer of meanings carried by the lexical items, and the layer of social-cultural meanings. Cloze procedure taps these three layers of language meanings, for, as McLeod (1965) stated, to successfully reconstruct a message

> requires a familiarity with the grammatical structure of English, an understanding of lexical meaning and, if the passages selected are concerned with a variety of experiences familiar in a given culture, they reflect to some extent 'social-cultural' meaning.

(McLeod, 1965, p. 3.)

There is some theoretical basis, then, for believing that cloze-scores index reading comprehension.

The readability or reading difficulty of a passage and a reader's comprehension of the passage are not, as was indicated above, independent entities. Rather, they are two ways of looking at the same event. If there is close correspondence between the decoder's and the encoder's system of language habits, then the passage or message is easy to comprehend. If there is not, comprehension is difficult.

It is perhaps worth noting that cloze procedure is not the same as blank-filling, an exercise quite widely used in English and foreign-language textbooks which was described by Pickett (1968) in an earlier issue of this journal. Nor is cloze procedure the same as a sentence-completion test. In both blank-filling and sentence-completion tests, words for deletion are chosen quite subjectively. With cloze procedure words are deleted mechanically. The whole procedure is objective. For example, every nth word may be deleted (e.g. every fifth word) or words may be deleted according to a table of random numbers. As Taylor (1957) explained:

> To restrict deletions to particular kinds of words is to ignore the fact that those kinds may not occur equally often in different materials. That difference in frequency of occurrence may itself be a readability factor;

if so, its effect should be included in—not excluded from—the results. (Taylor, 1957, p. 25).

From work the author has done with English as a foreign language in Papua and New Guinea, certain guide-lines on the use of cloze procedure have emerged which may prove useful to the practising teacher. These are tentative and may need to be revised in the light of further research.

Firstly, cloze procedure may be used to measure the reading difficulty of English for non-native speakers. The procedure for constructing cloze readability tests is as follows. Select passages sufficiently long to allow approximately fifty deletions per passage. Delete every fifth word systematically through each passage. Indicate a missing word by a blank of the same length as the deleted word. An answer column is required alongside the passage for subjects to record their answers. The method of preparing cloze tests is simple if a photo-copier is available. All that is required is for pieces of paper to be glued over words for deletion and a xerox copy made of the passage. The advantage of this procedure is that it allows such factors as size of print, illustrative material, and page layout to be incorporated in, not excluded from, the cloze estimate of readability. The next step is to administer the cloze tests to a group of about fifty subjects. Tests are marked by giving a score of one for each word correctly replaced. The total score obtained on a passage by the sample of subjects is an estimate of the passage-reading difficulty. Cloze scores expressed as percentages allow the reading difficulties of passages for a given group of subjects to be compared.

Secondly, cloze procedure may be used to measure the reading comprehension abilities of non-native speakers learning English. A reading test, the Cloze Reading Comprehension, has been developed to index subjects' reading achievement. Reliability and validity studies show the test to be suitable with primary-school subjects for whom English is the medium of instruction.

In conclusion, the same problem is present in Papua and New Guinea as confronts teachers of reading in all countries—the problem of matching the difficulty of reading material to pupils' reading ability. Cloze procedure appears one of the most promising techniques to emerge in recent years for measuring comprehension and reading difficulty.

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Linguistic Analysis as an Aid in Advanced Language-Teaching[1]

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1. *Some preliminary remarks on the use of linguistic methods in language teaching.*

There seems to be growing enthusiasm among many language teachers and teacher trainers for a more explicit linguistic approach in foreign-language teaching. It seems to be increasingly felt that, beyond the initial teaching stages, the teacher should endeavour to make explicit linguistic observations about the language material he is working with and as far as possible to account for these observations in terms of appropriately formulated generalisations. Although they are unlikely to have any immediate impact on the learner's observed performance, such generalisations, if empirically sound, may usefully serve to confirm and reinforce the tacit knowledge of the grammar of the foreign language that the learner must already unconsciously

have acquired if he is able to express himself at all creatively in the language.

The danger inherent in an explicit linguistic approach in language teaching, however, is that the generalisations of the classroom teacher will not adequately account for the actual language-data to which his students are exposed. In practice, the teacher will tend to rely for the linguistic information he imparts upon oversimplified and often factually inaccurate descriptions that have filtered down to the course-books from the available reference grammars. If he is conscious of any inadequacies in his source material, he may attempt to draw upon his own intuitive knowledge of the target language, but without effective recovery techniques this knowledge is likely to prove extremely difficult to exploit.

It may reasonably be expected, of course, that more adequate reference grammars will eventually become available to the language teacher. Recent developments in linguistic theory have stimulated an unprecedented amount of research on the syntax of the major languages of the world—particularly English—and this research promises to yield important results for teachers of these languages. At the present time, however, most of the published work is theory-orientated and the descriptive material that emerges tends to be illustrative and fragmentary. The task of extracting and collating the pedagogically relevant information is likely to be well beyond the capability of the vast majority of practising language teachers and it would seem wise to assume, therefore, that for some time to come they will have available to them more or less unsatisfactory material for the grammatical content of their courses.

If the teacher does not have access to adequate grammatical information, he should either refrain from making all but the most elementary linguistic observations or he should endeavour to tap his own intuitive knowledge of the language, at least in those areas in which his source material is noticeably deficient. He is unlikely to succeed in bringing to consciousness the tacit linguistic knowledge he possesses, however, if he relies solely upon hunches or intuitive guesses based upon introspective evidence. He needs to have at his disposal a set of exploratory techniques that will enable him to recover systematically from attested data such linguistic information as he requires in his teaching task. Now it seems to me entirely reasonable to suppose that the analytical techniques that working linguists find revealing in investigating the syntax of a language might be employed with equal profit by those whose primary concern is to teach the language. Of course the teacher will not be required to state the linguistic facts he uncovers in accordance with some general

theory of description (e.g. a generative-transformational theory); how he chooses to organise and express the linguistic information he derives must depend upon pedagogic rather than metalinguistic considerations. But basically he needs much the same linguistic information as the linguist and there seems no reason in principle why he should not avail himself of linguistic techniques to obtain it.

Following traditional practice, the teacher may choose to present his grammatical material prescriptively. In appropriate circumstances, however, a more heuristic approach to the teaching of grammar might be adopted. Once the basic structures of the foreign language have been mastered, students might begin to profit from textually-based analytical work in which the same recovery techniques that are recommended to the teacher may be employed. It is surely pedagogically sound practice to encourage advanced students to develop their own insights into the foreign language through the careful study of actual language material. Simply to present them with the relevant linguistic facts in the form of ready-made sets of rules or prescriptions about correct usage does very little, I suspect, to enhance syntactic fluency or to develop a deeper understanding of the structure of the language they are studying. Equally, however, the linguistic study of text by advanced learners, unless carried out in accordance with effective techniques of analysis, is likely to be superficial and unrevealing.

Unfortunately, the formulation of explicit analytical techniques is not a task that many professional linguists care to undertake nowadays. In their own research they tend not to work rigidly to any fixed schedule of analytical operations nor do they always work with a corpus of attested utterances. If they are investigating their own language, they may well prefer to rely very largely upon introspection and flashes of insight, on the basis of which they may formulate tentative hypotheses which are subsequently confirmed or disconfirmed by some empirical test. The linguistically unsophisticated student investigating the syntax of a foreign language cannot be expected to work in this way, however; he needs to be given explicit step-by-step procedures to follow, which, initially at least, should be applied in the analysis of set pieces of text. It is to be hoped, of course, that the carefully controlled analytical work that the student undertakes in accordance with prescribed techniques will gradually develop the habit of examining with greater consciousness and sensitivity whatever language material he happens to be exposed to. It is the training that textually-based analytical work provides in conscious linguistic observation and enquiry rather than the factual information it yields that constitutes the strongest justification for its use as an aid in advanced language-teaching.

2. *Heuristic procedures for investigating uses of the English definite article.*

Let us attempt now to illuminate the foregoing remarks with a specimen analysis of a selected portion of text. Since our purpose is merely illustrative, we shall limit our attention to the various occurrences in the text of the definite article. The heuristic techniques we shall employ, although especially revealing in investigating the syntax of the article, might be variously adapted for investigating other structural elements such as quantifiers, prepositions, tense and aspectual affixes, etc. They are not, however, suited to the analysis of internally complex structures such as derived nominals, relative clauses, etc., which, unlike the articles, respond to various transformational tests. It needs to be emphasised that, although the basic analytical operations we require in investigating the articles are routine in their application, they are not mechanical in the sense that they could be performed by a machine: the purpose of the operations is to prompt and stimulate the intuitions of the analyst, not to circumvent them. Like any other operations in linguistic analysis, those we shall employ in our present analysis presuppose native-speaker or near-native-speaker intuitions on the part of the investigator or his informant. If the students themselves do not have these intuitions, they must learn to use the teacher as an informant.

The procedures we wish to illustrate will be applied—not necessarily in any fixed order—to the occurrences of the definite article in the following passage:

Paul wanted to buy a villa on *the*[1] island of San Salvador so as to have a place to invite our friends to during *the*[2] summer. San Salvador lies about 300 miles off *the*[3] coast of Florida. *The*[4] Spanish took possession of it in 1582 and built a fortress commanding what was then one of *the*[5] main sea approaches to Central America. With *the*[6] decline of Spanish influence in *the*[7] area, *the*[8] island was abandoned to marauding sea-pirates and it was not until over a century later that *the*[8] place was resettled. Today, *the*[10] climate and *the*[11] magnificent beaches help to make it a paradise for tourists.

We might define the analytical task as being that of accounting for the selection of the definite article in each of its numbered occurrences. Before we begin to focus upon individual instances, however, we might attempt to characterise in general terms the nature of the constraints governing article selection.

Any adequate account of article selection, it seems to me, must distinguish at least implicitly between grammatical constraints on the choice of article and constraints of a purely referential nature. We may say that the choice of article is grammatically constrained if there is some element or feature in the immediate verbal context that automatically 'selects' one particular article

rather than another. An article that is grammatically selected and hence predictable in its context contributes nothing to the meaning of the sentence in which it is contained and is significant mainly as a syntactic marker of nominality. Where there is no grammatical constraint on the choice of article, however, the article selected has crucial semantic significance as a reference indicator, signalling the intended reference of the attendant noun.

A simple substitution test will reveal whether or not any particular occurrence of the definite article in the text is grammatically selected: if the definite article is replaceable by any other article then its selection cannot be entirely determined by the verbal context. It is important when applying this substitution test, however, to distinguish between replacement by the so-called zero article and the total suppression of the article. Whereas zero replacement invariably sets up a contrast of meaning, suppression, in those contexts in which the presence of the article is optional, leaves meaning unchanged. It might be noted that the final occurrence of the definite article in the text—that on *beaches*— may be deleted without disturbing meaning for, without its attendant article, *beaches* falls under the scope of the definite article on the co-ordinate noun *climate*.

If the definite article is replaceable, the analyst might endeavour to account for its selection in terms of some distinctive referential feature of the adjoining noun. Traditionally, the reference of a noun preceded by the definite article in contrast to the indefinite article or zero would be characterised somewhat vaguely as 'definite', 'specific', 'known', 'established', etc. It ought to be possible, however, to give a more precise exposition of the contrastive value of the article in terms of some distinctive adjunction to the associated noun. If the definite article stands in paradigmatic contrast with the indefinite article or zero, it will generally be possible to 'restore' to the attendant noun some adjunct, recoverable from the context, that complements the definite article and makes explicit the implicit referential specification of the noun. It is possible in respect of article 8 in the text, for example, to restore to the noun *island* the phrase *of San Salvador*, thereby making explicit the referential specification of *island* implicit in the text[1]. It is the latest presence of the phrase *of San Salvador*, we might say, that accounts for the selection of the definite article before *island*.

Despite the difference in form, the noun *place* preceded by article 9 in the text is again referentially identical with *island of*

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[1]The type of use instanced here is that referred to traditionally as the 'anaphoric' use of the article (cf. George O. Curme, *A Grammar of the English Language, Vol. III, Syntax*, pp. 510–11: Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1931).

Salvador. The writer has availed himself here of the familiar stylistic device of employing a semantically related generic noun as a proform in order to avoid the repetition of *island*. *Place* could, of course, be replaced by *island* without any change of meaning.

The remaining instances of the definite article in the text appear to have little or no contrastive value and the initial task for the analyst must be to identify the element in the environment whose presence restricts the choice of article. If the restrictive element is not immediately apparent, it may be located by performing substitution and omission tests on each of the neighbouring forms in turn until it is found that by some substitution or omission the restriction on the choice of article is relaxed.

If we direct our attention to the first occurrence of the definite article in the text, we find that no substitutions are possible and we must look, therefore, for the constraining element in the environment. This, quite plainly, is the *of*-phrase adjoining the noun *island*, for the suppression of the *of*-phrase removes the constraint on the attendant article. From this preliminary observation, we might endeavour to capture a generalisation that will account for the occurrence of the definite article before *island*. We may work towards this generalisation by first setting up the paradigms of *island* and of *San Salvador*, but in making substitutions on each of the two forms it is imperative that the internal relations of the noun phrase remain unaltered. Since these relations are not clearly signalled by the linking preposition *of*, it would be wise to explicate them as well as possible by paraphrase. The phrase *the island of San Salvador* may be paraphrased by *the island which is (called) San Salvador* and may thus be said (notionally speaking) to embody the relation between a named element and a naming element. The same relation reappears in *the city of San Salvador* but not in say *the coast of San Salvador*, which is clearly not paraphrasable by *the coast which is (called) San Salvador*. Holding the relation constant, then, we find that we may replace *island* by a number of non-proper place nouns of the notional set of *city, town, village, port, state, county, continent, kingdom, republic*, etc. and *San Salvador* by any appropriate proper place noun. None of the replacements, it seems, affects the constraint on the choice of article.

We are now in a position to formulate a preliminary generalisation in terms of a specified naming-relation between two classes of place nouns. Since the syntax of English presumably permits the speaker to name things other than places, however, we might seek to capture a wider generalisation by asking whether, given the same relation but between different sub-classes of nouns, the constraint on the choice of article still holds.

Once we move out of the notional set of *city, town, village* ...
however, we find that we cannot freely employ structures of
the form NP *of* NP to express the same naming relation. If we
utilise a proper noun as the naming element, we tend to place
it either immediately after the named element without the inter-
vention of the preposition *of*, as in *the poet Burns, the opera
Carmen, the film Crossfire*, etc., or immediately in front of the
named element, as in *the Atlantic Ocean, the Dorchester Hotel,
the Times newspaper*, etc. This inversion of the named and naming
elements seems typically to take place when the naming element
itself carries the definite article (cf. *the Atlantic, the Dorchester,
The Times*, etc.). It seems that the grammar of English does not
permit the juxtaposing in close opposition of two noun phrases
each containing the definite article as in ×*the Ocean the Atlantic*
or ×*the Hotel the Dorchester*. If inversion does not take place,
the definite article accompanying the naming element must be
suppressed, as it is in *the River Nile* (from ×*the River the
Nile*) and in *the liner Queen Elizabeth* (from ×*the liner the Queen
Elizabeth*). Further investigation reveals that in certain cases the
definite article accompanying the named element is also lost:
it is lost, for example, in *Lake Victoria* and again in *King George*,
though not, be it noted, in *the Emperor Ferdinand*. The initial
definite article is also lost in compound formations of the type
of *New York State* and *New York City*, these two examples being
apparently condensed versions of *the State of New York* and
the City of New York respectively.

Quite clearly, the scope for generalisation in this area of the
syntax is severely limited by the variety of surface patterns
available and by the unpredictable behaviour of individual
lexical nouns. The analysis is not necessarily without value,
however, if it fails to lead to neat general statements that account
for all the data brought under consideration. Some benefit
may derive from the exercise if it succeeds in revealing to the
student the structural parallelism of the different surface forms
elicited by substitution and in bringing to his attention the
absence from certain of these forms of the definite article.

Let us briefly consider now each of the remaining occurrences
of the definite article in the text, utilising the same basic operations
of contrastive substitution and omission. Article 2 in the text
is not replaceable, its presence being required by the adjoining
preposition *during*. Suppression of the preposition, we find, neces-
sitates the replacement of the definite article by a demonstrative:
... *so as to have a place to invite our friends*

to $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} the \\ this \\ that \end{array} \right\}$ *summer.*

Alternatively, replacement of the preposition by *in* permits us to omit the article before summer:

. . . so as to have a place to invite our friends to in summer.

The omission of the article following *in* does not appear to affect meaning if *summer* is understood in a generic sense.

The article on *coast* (3 in the text) may appear at first glance to be required by the presence of the adjoining *of*-phrase. If we remove the *of*-phrase, however, we find that some restriction on the choice of article persists: in particular, we note that the selection of the indefinite article is still excluded—presumably by the noun *coast* itself. If we wish to place the indefinite article before *coast*, it seems that we must expand it to *coastline*.

Article 4 in the text is automatically selected by the adjoining noun *Spanish*. Replacement of *Spanish* by various other nouns of nationality reveals that whereas the countable nouns (*Spaniards, Germans, Italians,* etc.) leave the choice of determiner open, the non-countable nouns (*Spanish, French, English,* etc.) combine with the definite article only. Normally countable nouns of nationality do not express quite the same meaning as their non-countable counterparts when accompanied by the definite article (contrast *the English* and *the Englishmen*), but in the present context *the Spanish* may apparently be replaced by *the Spaniards* without necessarily altering meaning.

Article 5 attached to *main sea approaches* is replaceable only by a demonstrative or a genitive article. The restrictive element is apparently the pre-article numeral *one (of)*, for if this is suppressed various quantifiers may be substituted in for the definite article. It should be noted that if the plural affix on *approach* is suppressed, the whole article complex may be replaced by the indefinite article, apparently without disturbing meaning. It would appear that in some contexts *a* may have the force of *one of the* but since in this exercise we are not primarily concerned with the indefinite article we shall not attempt to specify these contexts.

The article on *decline* (6) has no contrastive value, being required apparently by the presence of the preposition *of*, linking *decline* with *Spanish influence*. If we replace *of* by *in*, however, we find that the constraint on the choice of article is relaxed and replacement by *a* becomes possible (cf. *a decline in Spanish influence*). *Decline* belongs to a small paradigm of de-verbal nouns which includes such notionally related forms as *rise, fall, growth, increase,* etc., each of which appears with both *in* and *of* in derived nominal structures. It would be useful to be able to give an exposition of the difference in meaning between paired expressions such as *the decline of Spanish influence* and *a decline in Spanish influence* in terms of the distinctive co-occurrence potential of the constituent forms.

Article 7 in the text may be replaced by a demonstrative or genitive but again not by the indefinite article, this being excluded, seemingly, by the adjoining noun *area*, which in this context belongs to the paradigm of *vicinity, neighbourhood, region*, etc. and not (as in say *an area of London*) to the paradigm of *part, piece, fragment*, etc. It would appear that two homonyms with the shape of *area* exist in the language, one countable and capable of combining with the indefinite article, the other not.

Consider finally, the article attached to *climate*. The selection of the definite article may be partly explained by the latent presence of an identifying *of*-phrase: if we restore the *of*-phrase to produce *the climate of the island*, the definite article on *climate* no longer admits of any replacement. Even without the *of*-phrase, however, the contrastive potential of the definite article is severely limited by the inherent properties of the noun *climate*. It might be assumed that *climate*, being apparently uncountable, is completely intolerant of the indefinite article. Further manipulation of the context, however, reveals that when a restrictive modifier is placed on the noun, it readily accepts the indefinite article (cf. *a lovely climate*, etc.). As an uncountable noun, *climate* appears to be unexceptional in this respect: inspection of the paradigm of the noun in its present context reveals a number of other nouns (e.g. *sea, atmosphere, wind*, etc.) which in their central uses are apparently uncountable but which behave like *climate* in accepting the indefinite article when restricted by a modifier (cf. *a calm sea, a pleasant atmosphere, a strong wind*, etc.). Other members of the paradigm, however, such as *weather, sunshine, rain*, etc. reject the indefinite article whether or not they are accompanied by a restrictive modifier (cf. ×*a lovely weather*, ×*a warm sunshine*, ×*a torrential rain*, etc.). It would appear that grammars of English need to recognise two sub-classes of uncountable noun, one consisting of nouns that are strictly uncountable in all contexts, the other of nouns that exhibit certain of the syntactic properties of uncountable nouns only when unaccompanied by a restrictive adjunct.

3. *Concluding remarks*

For those teachers who are accustomed to dealing comprehensively and in highly general terms with the uses of the definite article, the foregoing analysis, although in fact rather cursory, may seem to be unnecessarily detailed and too narrowly focussed upon individual lexical nouns. Many uses of the article, it might be objected, are not exemplified in the text and much further textual analysis would have to be undertaken in order to achieve comprehensive coverage. To treat the whole of the syntax of the

language in the same way would require far more time than most teachers have available.

This of course is perfectly true. On the other hand, advanced learners are unlikely to derive much benefit from grossly over-simplified descriptions which manifestly fail to account for the rich language data to which they are exposed. Simplified versions of the grammar may be harmless enough in the early stages of language teaching so long as the language material employed in the classroom is proportionately restricted. At an advanced .level, however, simplified descriptions are likely to have a stultify-ing effect on the linguistic development of the learners.

To provide adequate treatment in depth at an advanced level, the teacher will have to be highly selective with regard to the grammatical material he uses. If he presents his selected material prescriptively, however, his students will acquire incomplete private reference grammars which they will be incapable of subsequently augmenting for themselves except by consulting other, published grammars that are likely to be largely inaccessible to them or factually unsound. By giving advanced students some experience of working with linguistic research methods, the teacher at least equips them with certain basic analytical tech-niques with which to pursue further study.

Errata

See page 236, line 33, of Vol. XXIV, No. 3, May 1970—H. C. M. Davie's article:

The word 'incorrect' should be 'correct'. The examples which follow should not be marked with asterisks.

In the heading of the article, for 'The Cromwell School' read 'The Commer-cial School'.

Newsboard

For particulars of the International **Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language**, including details of the new decimal rates of subscription (to IATEFL alone, or to IATEFL and **English Language Teaching** jointly), write to: IATEFL, 16 Alexandra Gardens, Hounslow, Middlesex, England. (Please enclose an adequate number of postal reply coupons, if you want an air-mail reply.)

A special post-conference issue of the IATEFL **Newsletter** appears in February and is sent to all members of the Association.

Readers' Letters

1. Mrs C. Tezer and Dr F. Burroughs write: English has, in recent years, become an international language. It is frequently used as the language of communication among governments and intergovernmental organisations. In many countries English is the language most generally designated the preferred non-native language. The result is an increasing demand for programmes in English as a second and foreign language and for English instructors. In response to this demand for learning English, more and more English programmes are being built; more and more classes are being formed. With this broadening of scope, certain questions which have remained unanswered take on increasingly greater importance. Two of these questions are discussed below.

Who wants to study English?

This may at first appear to be a surprising question, for the demand for English as a second language has increased so much that almost all students seem eager to learn English. On further examination, however, it can be seen that the question is of real importance, a fact evident to instructors who have had experience in teaching English as a second language in a non-English-speaking country. This popular demand for the language, to a great extent, precludes selection and differentiation. The result is classes of students with greatly varying abilities, interests, and purposes.

The sheer number of individuals enrolling in classes of English as a second language puts a tremendous pressure not only on the teacher attempting to instruct the students but on the programme and its

co-ordinator. It is not uncommon for a teacher to face a class of forty or fifty students, each claiming to possess an avid interest in 'mastering' English. Such vast enrolments encumber attempts by the teacher to devote time and effort to individual students. The teacher must, therefore, give a minimum of attention to each student, and this results in frustration for both the teacher and the student and in little progress.

Further, it has been found that among the large number of students feigning an interest in English are many who have little or no motivation to master the language and who are attending class only because such attendance is a prestige symbol. These students can generally be identified without difficulty, for they often create disturbance in the classroom and usually resist instruction. Often they do not listen; they chatter and disturb the instructor and prevent other students from benefiting from the lesson. If a teacher is unfortunate enough to have one or two such students, he generally has great difficulty in teaching effectively. At best a poor learning situation results.

The problems and frustrations inherent in these unwanted situations are realities to teachers. The question, then, of who should study English is a pertinent one. Only when it is answered satisfactorily will progress and classes in English as a second or foreign language achieve significant and really rewarding results.

2. How can progress and classes in English as a foreign language be made meaningful? Given a situation plagued with a large enrolment and many uninterested students, neither a teacher nor a programme co-ordinator can do much to make a programme and class meaningful. When, however, a teacher or a co-ordinator is privileged to work with a group of interested students, he is challenged to ask himself, in what ways he can make his class or programme alive and overcome the obstacles to learning.

The question of how to make a programme or class interesting is particularly important when an instructor or co-ordinator is faced with a group of students who are interested in learning the language but who do not understand the cultures of English-speaking people. Many such students exist among those from the less urbanised areas of developing countries. These students have not generally acquired the negative attitudes so common to their more sophisticated city compatriots. The attitudes may include a dislike for academic pursuits, a preoccupation with the superfluous demonstrations of Westernisation and rejection of authority. The less urbanised students are eager to learn and willing to exert the necessary energy. They most often have, however, little or no knowledge of the cultures of the English-speaking world, and so there is almost no understanding of the cultural elements presented in the English programme. The teacher must be aware of cultural difficulties which might arise in the classroom. The teacher must also take into consideration the limited experience of the students. Making a class interesting and instructive for such students is certainly a difficult but not an impossible task. It is a challenge to be met by any enthusiastic instructor.

The two questions above remain unanswered and pose many problems in the classroom. They continue to exert a tremendous influence on the teaching-learning process. The settlement of these problems is vital to the progress and future of English as a second or foreign language.

2. P. S. Tregidgo writes: S.P. is right to say (in his answer, in *E.L.T.* of May 1970, to the question on the use of *motor* and *engine*) that we always talk about a steam-*engine* (not a steam motor). But this is not because it was an early invention. Clockwork is earlier than steam, but we now say clockwork

motor. The noun *motor* tends to denote something smaller and quieter than *engine*, and in non-technical British usage tends to be restricted to *clockwork motor* and *electric motor*. As a noun adjunct (in *motor-car*, *motor-vessel*, *motor-cycle*, *motor-mower*, etc.) *motor* does usually denote a petrol or diesel power-unit, but when we refer to the power-unit separately, most people still call it an *engine*! (e.g. 'I've just had to buy a new *engine* for my *motor-mower*').

In American English and in more technical language it is not quite the same, but in all kinds of English *engine* is a far more general word than *motor*. That is why we talk of the internal combustion *engine* and other kinds of engine.

Finally, internal combustion engines using coal-gas were common in factories well before 1885; and Daimler did not make either the first, or the first successful, internal-combustion-engined vehicle.

Question Box

1. I recently came across this sentence in a novel: 'I think you might offer a reward to anyone who *can give* information about the crime,' said the detective. Why not *could give*?

ANSWER. *Could give* would be acceptable, but it would be more remote and therefore less forceful and direct than *can give*. That is all. There is no question here of a wrong sequence of tenses, since the verb *think* in the main clause is present tense and the modal auxiliary *might* in *might offer*, though past tense in form, refers to the immediate future. In this context *can give* means 'is able to give (and this is very likely)' whereas *could give* would mean 'might be able to give (and this is not very likely, and perhaps improbable)'.

The detective might have said more simply: 'I suggest you offer a reward to anyone who will come forward with information about this crime.'   [S.P.]

2. Are there any differences in meaning between *physical* and *physiological*, and between *technical* and *technological*?

ANSWER. Yes, there are important differences. If there were not, these pairs of near-synonyms would no longer remain in daily use.

Physical means 1. 'pertaining to the body', as in *physical exercise*: 2. 'pertaining to material things as opposed to things mental, moral, spiritual, or imaginary', as in *the physical sciences*; 3. 'pertaining to the laws of nature', as in *physical environment*.

Physiological means 'related to physiology or the science of living organisms', as in *physiological chemistry*.

Technical means 1. 'pertaining to a particular art, profession, skill, or trade', as in *technical terms*; 2. 'pertaining to the applied sciences', as in *technical training*.

Technological means 'related to technology or the application of scientific knowledge to practical purposes', as in a *technological civilisation*.

You will find ample explanations and illustrations of these four words in recent comprehensive dictionaries like Webster's *Third New International Dictionary* (1961), *The Random*

House Dictionary (1966), and *The American Heritage Dictionary*. (1969).   [S.P.]

3. What function is performed by the infinitive in the following sentence: 'The pilot returned *to find* his aircraft all ablaze'?

ANSWER. The infinitive here expresses a kind of consequence and you will therefore find this type of sentence listed under the *infinitive of result* in many grammar books. Notice that it was not the pilot's coming back that caused the fire. He returned and, as a result of his returning, he found his plane ablaze. Had he not returned, he would have remained in blissful ignorance of the disaster. The author might have said quite simply: 'The pilot returned and found . . .'

This type of adverbial infinitive, which is undoubtedly being used more and more in current English, is put by Jespersen (in *Essentials*, p. 338) under the heading of *infinitives as tertiaries*, expressing various degrees of purpose and result. Purpose often shades into result, but sometimes neither purpose nor results is immediately apparent. Jespersen very cleverly calls *to return* in 'He then left England never to return' an *infinitive of providential purpose*.

You will find three such adverbial or tertiary infinitives, in which purpose and result are strangely blended, in Browning's well-known Epilogue to *Asolando*:

One who never turned his back . . .
Held we fall *to rise*, are baffled *to fight* better,
        Sleep *to wake*.   [S.P.]

4. If it is correct that the so-called 'attached participle' may be preceded by a conjunction, as in *While reading, I fell asleep*, is it also correct to put a conjunction before an 'absolute construction', as in *The guide having arrived, the tourists started visiting the castle*?

ANSWER. It is true that certain conjunctions, e.g. *while, when, before, after*, occur at the beginning of what linguists are now calling a subjectless non-finite clause, e.g. *Before crossing the bridge, . . . After entering the town. . .* But not all conjunctions are used in this way. For example, *as* and *because* are not likely to be found in such a construction; and one of the examples given by the questioner—*Though listening, I could not understand a word*—strikes me as unacceptable, despite the fact that it may have been taken out of a grammar book.

I cannot think of any conjunction that could be used to introduce an 'absolute construction', i.e. a non-finite clause containing a subject which is different from the subject of the following main clause. As a matter of fact, in a recent scrutiny of over 100 modern written texts, I not only found no single example of an 'absolute construction' but I found only one example of a sentence of the type *Having learnt to drive at the age of 17, I had no difficulty*, etc. Sentences of the latter type are certainly used in present-day English; but I would say that 'absolute constructions' (e.g. *The guide having arrived, the tourists*, etc.) are now sufficiently rare for teachers of grammar to leave them out of their syllabus altogether. As for beginning such a construction with a conjunction, I would say 'Definitely not'.   [R.A.C.]

5. Is the following good English: *I was drinking a lot of wine at the party last night?* If it is not, why is *I was earning a lot of money last year* quite correct?

ANSWER. I think subtleties of this kind become clearer—and indeed illuminating—if one regards the *(be) -ing* verbal construction as an expression of *progressive aspect*, and as a 'marked form' which is used to make a special emphasis. It is now generally accepted that the emphasis made by the 'marked' progressive aspect is *on the action in progress* or *the duration or the*

incompletion of the activity. The simple form (e.g. *drank*) either makes no such emphasis, or it draws attention to the action as a *whole*.

To fill the gap in the sentence *I — a lot of wine at the party last night*, the progressive aspect seems inappropriate because the sentence—containing as it does the elements *a lot of wine* and *last night*—tends to draw attention to the total achievement of the drinker rather than to the duration or incompletion of his activity. On the other hand, in *I am afraid I was talking a lot of nonsense at the party last night*, the progressive aspect *is* appropriate, as it emphasises the duration of my chatter, the non-finality of it all, and the fact that my total achievement was immaterial.

The progressive aspect is also used to emphasise the idea of a temporary state of affairs, as in the example *I am getting up at six o'clock every morning this week* (*I don't usually get up so early*). Hence the acceptability of *I was earning a lot of money last year*, which can draw attention either to the duration of one's earning or to the temporarily high level of one's income. The questioner doubted whether an author or a professional gambler could use the progressive aspect in this case. On the contrary, *I was earning a lot of money last year* is precisely the kind of thing a freelance author—more successful last year than this—might say. He could also say *I earned a lot*, etc., but then his emphasis would be on his total achievement. [R.A.C.]

Reviews

TEACHERS OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE: THEIR TRAINING AND PREPARATION.
Edited, with an introduction, by G. E. Perren. *C.U.P.* 1968. 233 pp. 32*s*. 6*d*. ($5.50).

This is a collection of essays by nine outstanding British specialists in the training of teachers of English as a second language. Each of the nine chapters, arranged in alphabetical order by author's name, treats a different theme. Each theme represents the aspect of teacher training of which the author has special knowledge. It is not surprising, therefore, if, as the editor takes pains to point out, the book

does not cover the entire field. And, although the chapters were written especially for this book, they do not as a group represent a systematic treatment of the subject. They are rather a sort of anthology of thoughtful and informed opinion based on wide and varied experience in the field. In a collection such as this it is understandable that there should be a certain amount of overlapping and a number of contradictory opinions.

The questions treated may be divided into three groups—professional training, subject-matter training, and area problems.

The group of essays on the pro-

fessional training of language teachers deals with the general question of training to teach English, practice teaching, the training of teachers of adults, and advanced study for the specialist.

In the chapter on training to teach English, G. E. Perren points out that in recent years there has been a remarkable surge of interest in the techniques of language teaching as a result of the rapid expansion of schools in countries where a second language must be used. The author is particularly concerned with countries where English must be used as a medium of instruction. In more highly developed countries the poor yield of traditional language-teaching methods has been so obvious as to promote radically new ideas and to encourage the development of a technocratic approach—with its advantages and dangers of conscious specialisation. Teachers must not substitute concentration on linguistic abstractions and on the learning of 'noises, patterns, or even words' for the teaching of English for uses based on a practical assessment of the needs.

A. S. Hornby's chapter on practice teaching is full of the common-sense remarks of an experienced trainer of language teachers. The author describes what a young trainee undergoes in a demonstration class under the control of an experienced teacher. This chapter deals especially with the problem of training non-graduate teachers in developing countries—teachers who themselves may still have serious difficulties with the language of which they are expected to provide a model.

In a sober and objective description of the problems of training teachers of adults, H. A. Cartledge stresses the need for specialised trainers of teachers. After deploring the lack of trained staff, the level of their training, the inadequacy of the textbooks and training programmes, the author offers some valuable suggestions for improving

both the quality of the teaching and the level of achievement of adult learners of English in language institutes in Britain and overseas. He points to a large, ill-served population of adults throughout the world eager to pay the price necessary for obtaining a mastery of English.

S. P. Corder is more concerned with training the advanced specialist and the specialised language-teaching inspector and administrator. In a clear, systematic, and constructive study of a complex and controversial question, the author urges a proper balance between theory and practice teaching and suggests a programme of courses to be covered in small classes and tutorial groups.

These four chapters dealing with professional training leave the reader with the impression that there is an urgent need, a world-wide demand, and an opportunity to professionalise the training of teachers of English as a second language. Of the two chapters which treat of the preparation of the teacher in the subject matter one is devoted to the language and the other to the literature— or rather to literacy in English.

In a well-structured treatment of the language problem, Peter Strevens analyses what is meant by 'the teacher's English' and what can be done about it. He severely criticises the relevance and efficiency of some of the existing courses for improving the English of overseas teachers. He is also much concerned about standards of attainment in the use of the language as a prerequisite for a qualification to teach it and he offers a number of practical and judicious suggestions for improving the present situation.

Bruce Pattison, an authority with long experience in training teachers of English from all parts of the world, is the author of the chapter on the literacy element in teacher education. Having for many years been concerned with the teaching of English literature at home and abroad, the author has greatly widened the scope of his concern

to include much more than the study of works of the imagination. In this chapter he deals with the general question of the written word in teacher education, its relevance, its permanence, and its use in the pursuit of the many and varied activities of a civilised society. Taking a wide view of the function of English in the education and life of those who learn it, the author sees the need to justify their efforts by making the language relevant to those needs and interest which must endure and inform long after the spoken word is no longer heard. And it is through the written word that self-education, which is part of a teacher's preparation to teach others, is best attained.

The three remaining chapters are devoted to the training of teachers in developing countries, in Africa, and to study centres in Britain.

A rather specialised chapter by D. A. Smith on in-service training for teachers of English in developing countries deals with the difficult problems of improving teaching methods while, at the same time, increasing the output of trained teachers. A partial solution is sought in the short retraining course and in-service training which, because of limited time and lack of training staff, has to be organised with the the utmost efficiency. And the content must be immediately practicable, if the teachers are to justify their investment in time and effort. Leaning on his experience in India and Africa, the author discusses various formulas for the organisation and administration of such short courses.

As an example of what can be achieved in one developing area, the chapter by J. A. Bright is a description of his own experience in the Sudan and Uganda which could serve as an example—and indeed, an inspiration—for others who, with limited resources, must reform and expand the training of teachers of English in other parts of the world.

Although it deals with training and study centres in Britain, W. R. Lee's contribution provides the advice of an expert to anyone in any part of the world who may be planning to set up a centre for the training of language teachers. In this well-informed and well-written study the author provides evidence for the creation of such centres. He points out the many advantages of the training centres which bring together English teachers from different countries—all living and studying together in an English-speaking country. Whether such centres should be incorporated into the universities is debatable. At all events, the courses offered by such centres should not be limited to a single year.

An introduction by G. E. Perren places the collection as a whole and each contribution individually within the context of the expanding use of English overseas. Although there is no index, there is a page of biographical detail about the contributors, followed by a selected bibliography of seventy-two items divided into three sections: bibliographies and periodicals, books on methodology and teaching, and background and reference works.

The value of this book is not so much in its structure or in any systematic presentation of teacher-training methods and practices. It is chiefly in the accumulated wisdom of nine of the world's leading and most experienced authorities on the training of teachers of English as a second language who have joined to condense between the covers of the same book the fruits of their long experience.

CHANGING ENGLISH. Simeon Potter. *André Deutsch.* The Language Library. 1969. 192 pp. 30*s*.

THE CHANGING ENGLISH LANGUAGE. Brian Foster. *Penguin.* 1970. 275 pp. 7*s*.

A characteristic of living things is that they change in response to their environment, and this is no

less true of living languages than it is of organisms. When the layman thinks about the changes that are taking place in the English language, in particular the changes that have taken place to his knowledge in his own lifetime, his mind usually turns to the new scientific vocabulary. He is usually preoccupied with additions to the language at the level of lexis and he is less interested in changes of structure. For however rapidly we may skim the pages of our dailies we cannot help encountering new scientific words in the popular articles that we read, and we feel that we are bound to learn the meanings of as many of these new words as we can.

For the average man the sounds of language are conceived of as being immutable and inextricably combined with the alphabetical system with which the language happens to be written. To him what he and his friends speak seems right and most natural; and people who do not speak as he does are either 'putting it on' or are aliens of one kind or another. Both of these books deal in some detail with the changes in pronunciation which have taken place during the last half century, and both authors stress the great difficulty of establishing for certain the facts of pronunciation as it was before the days of electrical recording. There seems to be good reason for supposing that changes taking place at present do not involve a complete break with existing customs of language, though a superficial survey may suggest that they do. In fact, they seem to be following a trend which has existed for a very long time. Change has its rules too. A case in point is that of spelling pronunciations. The tradition of appeal to the spelling of a word and justification by analogy is by no means a new one. There seems to be evidence that English has for a long time been coming to terms with its spelling, at least so far as the less common words are concerned.

An account of changes in the contemporary pronunciation of English cannot help but bring us up against the related questions of Shaw's script and the Initial Teaching Alphabet. Both authors deal with these topics with admirable brevity and clarity. It is easy to persuade ourselves that the illogicality of English spelling is a blessing in disguise and to congratulate ourselves on not having a national academy which guides the development of the English language. In linguistic matters the policy of *laissez-faire* has its peculiar appeal, not least because of the current move away from a prescriptive to a descriptive view of language.

Mr Foster in his book is well content to cite instances and rarely ventures to express a preference for one form as against another. The result is that his book tends to drag a little. It is interesting up to a point to read about the nature of the impact of American English on the form we speak in England, but the effect of reading the multiplicity of examples which the author provides leaves the eyelids a little weary.

Professor Potter's book, on the other hand, contains only sufficient examples to clarify his points. And these examples are made all the tastier by the author's salty prejudices. He is not afraid to praise this innovation and to deplore that, so that the reader feels that he is being treated less as a equal than as a friend; all in all a subtler form of flattery than that practised by Mr Foster, who gives us the facts and, confident in our judgement, leaves us to make of them what we can. For example, where the two writers deal with pre-modifying nouns—newspaper headlines provide innumerable examples of these—Mr Foster remarks 'This construction is undoubtedly on the increase'. Professor Potter, on the other hand, prejudices the issue before he embarks upon it by heading the relevant section 'Overloaded nominal groups'.

This review began with an analogy drawn between language and the structure of a living creature. Putting down Mr Foster's book, one cannot help feeling worried as to whether the living creature that is the English language is in as robust a stage of health as we would wish it to be. And since for the reader the English language is effectively what he knows of it, the feeling is like that after reading one of those old-fashioned volumes that claimed to teach us to diagnose our own ills. We seem to have so many of the symptoms that we have been reading about that, far from feeling reassured, we are convinced that our own English is undergoing some ominous change and that it carries within it the seeds of its own destruction. Of course this may well be true. Languages, like people, are bound to die. Professor Potter, however, may deplore many of the things that are happening in English today, but he neither overrates the contribution to current English of, for example, the speech of the North American continent, nor does he refrain from castigating changes in usage which do not please him. It is by no means certain that the notion of 'acceptability' has superseded that of grammatical correctness so long as there is a Simeon Potter to ask 'Acceptable to whom?'

READ, THINK, AND ANSWER.
Gordon Green. *O.U.P.* 1969. viii + 72 pp. Price 6s.

It is important not to lose sight of the aims which underlie examinations. There is always a danger that we may do this and this danger is particularly great when we deal with examinations of written comprehension. Of course, we need to know if the candidate can understand the gist of the test passage, but we also need to discover if he can use the language to comment intelligently on the textual material. Some of us may care to add further requirements: the need to test the candidate's ability to find certain

factual information within a larger corpus of material, and his ability to make certain inferences from the information given in the text. Still others may believe that the comprehension examination ought to be linked with the essay type of examination and that the text for comprehension ought to be used as a launching-pad for creative writing of a fairly simple kind. The teacher's reaction to this book will depend on whether he subscribes to all or only part of the views outlined above.

Let us look at the title first of all. This book makes provision for a fair amount of interesting reading, a certain amount of inferential thought, and, if the teacher is conscientious in his use of the material, the use of a good deal of varied English in answering the questions on the textual matter. It is intended for students at an intermediate level, particularly for those taking the new English paper of the Lower Cambridge Certificate examination.

The book contains two kinds of exercise: questions based on multiple choice, and the more traditional type of questions. The multiple-choice questions are designed to test the candidate's control of vocabulary as well as his comprehension. It is claimed that these questions 'can also be used for bringing out certain teaching points in the vocabulary and structures illustrated in the passages'. It is not quite clear to this reviewer what that means. It is also claimed that the vocabulary is 'generally' restricted to the 2,075-word level of the General Service list. This may well be true, as far as it goes. Certainly the passages are admirably straightforward and free from stylistic oddities. It is less clear whether the traditional open-ended questions, which form fifty per cent of the testing section, can be answered within the same restricted vocabulary.

The traditional-type questions contain an abundance of information

questions which can be answered straight from the text. Questions involving inference or deductions, the answers to which are not stated explicitly in the text, are relatively rare, though not entirely absent. Completely extra-textual open-ended questions occur regularly. Examples are: 'Have you ever been to a zoo?'

'Have you ever seen a film with Orson Welles in it?' 'How much is $25,000 in the money of your country?' 'What countries are in Central America?' Some of these seem rather difficult unless the purpose is to send the students on a series of excursions to the library. Of course some of these can be answered by a simple 'Yes' or 'No' like 'Do you know what a combine harvester is?' English-educated students conditioned by our educational system would know better perhaps, but the foreign student might be forgiven for answering such questions by a brief negative, whether they knew or not.

This book would be quite effective in the hands of a native English-speaking teacher who is prepared to give examples of the sort of responses he expects the foreign learner to make. But even he might find himself with his back to the wall when challenged to judge the merits of a number of contradictory answers to a question like 'Was Galileo a brave man?' Fortunately a teacher's edition of this book is available and this provides suggestions as to how the exercises can be used as well as a Key to the multiple-choice sections.

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH.
John Eynon. *Hamish Hamilton*. 1970. x + 163 pp. 8s.

This practice book is intended for students preparing for the Cambridge Lower Certificate and for other examinations of a similar standard. The multiple-choice principle has been adopted throughout the book, which claims that the passages have been tested and found very

effective in widening students' vocabulary and increasing their knowledge of idioms. The latter phrase at least is one which will make many English-language teachers' flesh creep.

No acknowledgements are made to published books or journals and one must conclude from this that the twenty-five passages given are substantially the work of the author. One cannot help seeing this as a somewhat dangerous procedure, however versatile a writer the author may be. Each passage is followed by questions grouped in four sections. The Comprehension and Vocabulary questions involve the choice of the single 'best' answer from the selection given. Questions on Grammar and Usage sometimes require more than one appropriate answer and the student is expected to give them all. A third section of questions involves the rewriting of sentences by using alternative structures. These are often no more than transformation questions of the traditional type; active to passive, subordinate phrase to subordinate clause, direct speech to indirect speech, personal verb to impersonal verb, compound sentence to complex sentence, and so on.

But it is the fourth section which contains the most dubious items of all. These involve précis. An eighty-word limit is imposed on the summaries and the student is given a brief guide to selecting the relevant material from the passage and to avoiding 'the more obvious pitfalls'. The drawbacks to this kind of summary in fact are unwittingly exemplified in the illustrations which the author gives in his preface. Here the phrase 'a riverside path' is preferred to 'a path by the river' on the grounds that it contains fewer words, and the word 'encountered' is substituted for 'met' on the very dubious grounds that it is a stylistic improvement.

The difficulty seems to be that multiple-choice questions are very fashionable at present and authors of new books of comprehension

exercises feel bound to make use of them. If the questions are well-planned there is a gain in simplicity of marking and objectivity of scoring. But the questions have to be prepared very carefully indeed and the technique of writing effective questions can only be acquired with long practice. In particular the textbook writer must beware of the specious synonym. Contrary to the opinion which many students of English as a foreign language seem

to have, there is not a great number of synonyms in English, and those that there are can usually be distinguished on the grounds of register. It seems so easy to make use of apparent synonyms in devising multiple-choice questions, but we should be deluding ourselves if we thought we could improve the student's knowledge of English by doing so. We are more likely by this means to blunt his sensibility to language than to sharpen it.

Books and Periodicals Noted

Teaching of English as a Foreign Language:
REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE ON THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH, Singapore, 1966.

Spoken English:
OPEAC ORAL DRILLS. Workbook B. R. Mackin, J. Webb, R. L. Scott-Buccleuch. *O.U.P.* 1970. 11s.

Writing:
PUT IT IN WRITING. Anthony Howatt. *O.U.P.* 1970.

Vocabulary:
CONTEXTUALIZED VOCABULARY TESTS 1. L. A. Hill. *O.U.P.* 1970.

Courses:
ENGLISH IN SITUATIONS. R. O'Neill and the Research and Development Staff of the Eurocentre, Bournemouth. *O.U.P.* 1970. 15s.

COLLOQUIAL ENGLISH. M. C. Coles and B. D. Lord. *O.U.P.* 1970. 7s.

ENGLISH IN BUSINESS. R. S. de Schiffrin, B. A. Uteda, E. J. Golstein. Books 1 and 2. 9s. each. *Longman.* 1969.

A COURSE IN SPOKEN ENGLISH: INTONATION. M. A. K. Halliday. *O.U.P.* 1970. 20s.

Technical English:
ENGLISH PRACTICE FOR ENGINEERS. M. Hawkey. *Longman.* 1970. 6s.

Literature:
A NEW INTRODUCTION TO ENGLISH LITERATURE. D. J. May and L. A. Hill. Book 2. 1969. *O.U.P.*

A DICTIONARY OF LITERATURE IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE from Chaucer to 1940: Vol. 1. Compiled and edited by Robin Myers for the National Book League. *Pergamon.* 1970. £10. $27.

Immigrants:
TEACHING ENGLISH TO WEST INDIAN CHILDREN: the Research Stage of the Project. Schools Council Working Paper 29. *Evans/MethuenEducational.* 1970. 7s. 7d.

IMMIGRANT CHILDREN IN INFANT SCHOOLS. Diana Stoker. Schools Council Working Paper 31. *Evans/Methuen Educational.* 1970. 6s. 3d.

Miscellaneous:
FIRST SONGS IN ENGLISH. W. R. Lee. *O.U.P.* 1970. £2 for a set of records, plus purchase tax.

THE ENGLISH IMAGINATION. Stuart Holroyd. *Longmans.* 1969. 21s.

ERRATA—*Books and Periodicals Noted, October 1970.*
1. The author of 'The Cyrillic Alphabet' is Ilonka Schmidt-Mackey.
2. The title of L. A. Hill's book, mentioned in Miscellaneous section, is 'Intermediate Comprehension Pieces'.

N.B. Owing to shortage of space Periodicals are left over until the June issue.

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Contents

EDITORIAL

UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENTS of English in some parts of the world are largely concerned with the provision of courses for science and technology students. Often the department itself has little to say as to the nature of such courses, requirements being laid down by other departments. In certain places the department of English is regarded as a servicing unit. The staff is told (by those with no special knowledge of language-teaching problems) what kind of ability in English the students need, and is expected, usually within the space of one or two years, to provide them with it, and to refrain from providing them with anything else.

Where this state of affairs is to be found, it is usually also the case that students arrive at the university, after some years of English in the secondary school, unable either to speak or to read English. What they need is not a top dressing of technical and scientific vocabulary (which the English department is unfitted to provide) but a basic course designed to give them a command of the basic syntax and the most essential words of the language. The subject-matter of the course can, and no doubt should, lean towards the students' common professional interests; but nobody is interested in his studies alone.

Such a course, if for no other reason than to produce its result quickly, must have an oral basis, although for some students silent-reading skill is the immediate need.

Highly specialised vocabulary can be dealt with by means of bilingual dictionaries and glossaries, the latter worked out mainly by the subject specialists, with perhaps some help from the English department.

A Non-Contrastive Approach to Error Analysis[1]

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Introduction

The identification and analysis of interference between languages in contact has traditionally been a central aspect of the study of bilingualism. The intrusion of features of one language into another in the speech of bilinguals has been studied at the levels of phonology, morphology and syntax. The systems of the contact languages themselves have sometimes been contrasted, and an important outcome of contrastive studies has been the notion that they allow for prediction of the difficulties involved in acquiring a second language. 'Those elements that are similar to the (learner's) native language will be simple for him, and those areas that are different will be difficult.'[2] In the last two decades language teaching has derived considerable impetus from the application of contrastive studies. As recently as 1967, Politzer affirmed: 'Perhaps the least questioned and least questionable application of linguistics is the contribution of contrastive analysis. Especially in the teaching of languages for which no considerable and systematic teaching experience is available, contrastive analysis can highlight and predict the difficulties of the pupils.'[3]

Studies of second-language acquisition, however, have tended to imply that contrastive analysis may be most predictive at the level of phonology, and least predictive at the syntactic level. A recent study of Spanish-English bilingualism, for example, states: 'Many people assume, following logic that is easy to understand, that the errors made by bilinguals are caused by their mixing Spanish and English. One of the most important conclusions this writer draws from the research in this project is that interference from Spanish is not a major factor in the way bilinguals construct sentences and use the language.'[4]

[2]Robert Lado, *Linguistics Across Cultures*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1957, p. 2.

[3]Robert L. Politzer, 'Toward Psycholinguistic Models of Language Instruction', *TESOL Quarterly*, Vol. 2 No. 3, p. 151.

[4]Gail McBride Smith, 'Some Comments on the English of Eight Bilinguals', in *A Brief Study of Spanish-English Bilingualism*, Donald M. Lance, Texas AoM University, 1969.

This paper focuses on several types of errors, observed in the acquisition of English as a second language, which do not derive from transfers from another language. Excluded from discussion are what may be called interlanguage errors; that is, errors caused by the interference of the learner's mother tongue. A different class of errors are represented by sentences such as *did he comed, what you are doing, he coming from Israel, make him to do it, I can to speak French*. Errors of this nature are frequent, regardless of the learner's language background. They may be called intralingual and developmental errors. Rather than reflecting the learner's inability to separate two languages, intralingual and developmental errors reflect the learner's competence at a particular stage, and illustrate some of the general characteristics of language acquisition. Their origins are found within the structure of English itself, and through reference to the strategy by which a second language is acquired and taught.[1] A sample of such errors is shown in tables I–VI (see Appendix). These are representative of the sort of errors we might expect from anyone learning English as a second language. They are typical of systematic errors in English usage which are found in numerous case-studies of the English errors of speakers of particular mother tongues. They are the sort of mistakes which persist from week to week and which recur from one year to the next with any group of learners. They cannot be described as mere failures to memorise a segment of language, or as occasional lapses in performance due to memory limitations, fatigue, and the like.[2] In some learners they represent final grammatical competence; in others they may be indications of transitional competence.

Sources of the present study (see pages 214-19)

Tables I–VI are taken from studies of English errors produced by speakers of Japanese, Chinese, Burmese, French, Czech, Polish, Tagalog, Maori, Maltese, and the major Indian and West African languages.[3] From these sources I have selected those

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[1]Cp. Vivian Cook, 'The Analogy between First and Second Language Learning', *IRAL*, Vol. 7, pp. 207–16; H. . Stern, 'Foreign Language Learning and the New View of First-Language Acquisition', *Child Study* 30/4, 25–36: Paula Menyuk, *Sentences Children Use*, Massachusetts, MIT Press, 1969.

[2]S. P. Corder, 'The Significance of Learner's Errors', *IRAL* Vol. 5, pp. 161–9.

[3]Major sources for Tables I-IV are: F. G. French, *Common Errors in English*, O.U.P. London, 1949; L. Dušková, 'On Sources of Errors in Foreign Language Learning', *IRAL* Vol. 7, pp. 11–36; J. Arabski, 'A Linguistic Analysis of English Composition Errors made by Polish Students', *Studia Anglica Posnaniensia*, Vol. 1, Nos. 1 and 2, pp. 71–89; C. Estacia, 'English

errors which occurred in a cross-section ·of the samples. By studying intralingual and developmental errors within the framework of a theory of second-language learning, and through examining typical cases of the teaching of the forms from which they are derived, it may be possible to see the way towards teaching procedures that take account of the learner's strategy for acquiring a second language.

Types and causes of intralingual and developmental errors

An examination of the errors in tables I–VI suggests that intralingual errors are those which reflect the general characteristics of rule learning, such as faulty generalisation, incomplete application of rules, and failure to learn conditions under which rules apply. Developmental errors illustrate the learner attempting to build up hypotheses about the English language from his limited experience of it in the classroom or textbook. For convenience of presentation, tables I–VI will be discussed in terms of: 1. over-generalisation, 2. ignorance of rule restrictions, 3. incomplete application of rules, 4. false concepts hypothesised.

Over-generalisation

Jakobovits defines generalisation or transfer as 'the use of previously available strategies in new situations. . . . In second-language learning . . . some of these strategies will prove helpful in organising the facts about the second language, but others, perhaps due to superficial similarities, will be misleading and inapplicable'.[1] Over-generalisation covers instances where the learner creates a deviant structure on the basis of his experience of other structures in the target language. For example (see table I, 1, 3, 4, 8), *he can sings, we are hope, it is occurs, he come from*. Over-generalisation generally involves the creation of one

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Syntax Problems of Filipinos', *Proceedings of the 9th International Congress of Linguists*, Mouton, The Hague, 1964, pp. 217–23 (esp. comments by Meyerstein and Ansre); Jack Richards, 'Language Problems of Maori Children', *Comment* (Wellington, N.Z.), No. 36, 1968, pp. 28–32; A. W. S. Bhaskar, 'An Analysis of Common Errors in P.U.C. English', *Bulletin of the Central Institute of English* (Hyderabad, India), No. 2, 1962, pp. 47–57; S. Grelier, 'Recherche des principales interférences dans les systèmes verbaux de l'anglais du wolof et du français', Senegal, Centre de Linguistique Appliquée de Dakar, No. 31; E. F. Aguas, 'English Composition Errors of Tagalog Speakers and Implications for Analytical Theory', D.Ed. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1964.

[1]Leon A. Jakobovits, *A Psycholinguistic Analysis of Second-Language Learning and Bilingualism*, Institute of Communications Research, Illinois, 1969, p. 32. See also, Jakobovits' 'Second-Language Learning and Transfer Theory', *Language Learning* 19, pp. 55–86.

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deviant structure in place of two regular structures. It may be the result of the learner reducing his linguistic burden. With the omission of the third person -s, over-generalisation removes the necessity for concord, thus relieving the learner of considerable effort. Dušková, discussing the omission of third person -s, notes 'Since (in English) all grammatical persons take the same zero verbal ending except the third person singular in the present tense . . . omissions of the -s in the third person singular may be accounted for by the heavy pressure of all other endingless forms. The endingless form is generalised for all persons, just as the form *was* is generalised for all persons and both numbers in the past tense. . . . Errors in the opposite direction like *there does not exist any exact rules* may be explained either as being due to hypercorrection . . . or as being due to generalisation of the 3rd person singular ending for the 3rd person plural.'[1]

Over-generalisation is associated with redundancy reduction. It may occur, for instance, with items which are contrasted in the grammar of the language but which do not carry significant and obvious contrast for the learner. The -ed marker, in narrative or in other past contexts, often appears to carry no meaning, since pastness is usually indicated lexically in stories, and the essential notion of sequence in narrative can be expressed equally well in the present—*Yesterday I go to the university and I meet my new professor*. Thus the learner cuts down the tasks involved in sentence production. Ervin-Tripp suggests that 'possibly the morphological and syntactic simplifications of second-language learners correspond to some simplification common among children (i.e. mother-tongue speakers) learning the same language'.[2]

Certain types of teaching techniques increase the frequency of over-generalised structures. Many pattern drills and transform exercises are made up of utterances that can interfere with each other to produce a hybrid structure:

Teacher	Instruction	Student
He walks quickly.	Change to continuous form	*He is walks quickly.*

This has been described as overlearning of a structure.[3] At other times, *he walks* may be contrasted with *he is walking*, *he sings* with *he can sing*, and a week later, without any teaching of the forms, the learner produces *he can sings, he is walks*.

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[1]Dušková, *ibid.*

[2]Susan M. Ervin-Tripp, Comments on 'How and When Do Persons Become Bilingual' in *Description and Measurement of Bilingualism*, ed. L. G. Kelly. University of Toronto Press, Toronto 1969, p. 33.

[3]David K. Wolfe, 'Some Theoretical Aspects of Language Learning and Language Teaching', in *Language Learning*, 17, 3–4, p. 180.

Ignorance of rule restrictions

Closely related to the generalisation of deviant structures is failure to observe the restrictions of existing structures, that is, the application of rules to contexts where they do not apply. *The man who I saw him* (table III, 2) violates the limitation on subjects in structures with *who*. *I made him to do it* (table IV) ignores restrictions on the distribution of *make*. These are again a type of generalisation or transfer, since the learner is making use of a previously acquired rule in a new situation. Some rule restriction errors may be accounted for in terms of analogy; other instances may result from the rote learning of rules.

Analogy seems to be a major factor in the misuse of prepositions (table IV). The learner, encountering a particular preposition with one type of verb, attempts by analogy to use the same preposition with similar verbs. *He showed me the book* leads to *he explained me the book; he said to me* gives *he asked to me; we talked about it*, therefore *we discussed about it; ask him to do it* produces *make him to do it; go with him* gives *follow with him*. Some pattern exercises appear to encourage incorrect rules being applied through analogy. Here is part of a pattern exercise which practises *enable, allow, make, cause, permit.*

Expansion joints Safety valves We	permit allow	the pipes the steam the metal	to	expand or contract. escape from the boiler. cool slowly.
The heat Weakness in the metal	caused	the metal it	to	melt. fracture under tension.
The heat Weakness in the metal	made	the metal melt. it fracture under tension.		

It is followed by an exercise in which the student is instructed to complete a number of statements using verbs and prepositions from the table: *The rise in temperature—the mercury—rise up the tube. The risk of an explosion—the workers—leave the factory. The speed of the train—it—leave the rails on the curve . . . .*

From a class of 23 with mixed language backgrounds, no fewer than 13 produced sentences like *The rise in temperature made the mercury to rise up the tube.* Practising *make* in the same context as *allow it to, permit it to, enable it to*, precipitates confusion. Other instances of analogous constructions may be less easy

to avoid. Table III, 2 includes *this is not fit to drink it, the man who I saw him.* By analogy with the learner's previous experience of subject + verb + object constructions, the learner feels that there is something incomplete about *that's the man who I saw,* and so adds the object, after the verb, as he has been taught to do elsewhere.

Failure to observe restrictions in article usage may also derive from analogy, the learner rationalising a deviant usage from his previous experience of English. This may happen even when the mother tongue is close to the English usage. F. G. French gives the following example of how a common article mistake is produced by rational analogy.[1] In English we say *The sparrow is a small bird. Sparrows are small birds.* Since the statements are exactly parallel, a logical substitute for the second language would be *The sparrows are small birds.* In Burmese, the equivalents would be

sa gale thi	nge thaw	nget	pyit thi
The sparrow	small	bird	is

and in the plural

sa gale mya thi	nge thaw	nget mya	pyit kya thi
The sparrows	small	birds	are

Instead of following the form of the mother tongue, however, the learner, having first produced *The sparrows are* from *The sparrow is,* sees a parallel between *sparrows* and *birds,* and produces the common error *The sparrows are the small birds.* A similar example is noted by Aguas, from Tagalog-speaking students.[2]

Incomplete application of rules

Under this category we may note the occurrence of structures whose deviancy represents the degree of development of the rules required to produce acceptable utterances. For example, across background languages, systematic difficulty in the use of questions can be observed. A statement form may be used as a question, or one of the transformations in a series may be omitted, or a question word may simply be added to the statement form. Despite extensive teaching of both the question and the statement forms, a grammatical question form may never become part of competence in the second language. Redundancy may be an explanatory factor. The second-language learner, interested perhaps primarily in communication, can achieve quite efficient communication without the need for mastering more than the

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[1] French, *ibid.,* p. 9.
[2] Aguas, *ibid.,* p. 49.

elementary rules of question usage. Motivation to achieve communication may exceed motivation to produce grammatically correct sentences. A further clue may be provided by classroom use of questions.

The use of questions is a common teaching device. Typically they are used, not to find out something, but as a means of eliciting sentences. Alternatively, the statement form may be used as a means of eliciting questions through a transform exercise. Classroom observation suggests that the use of questions may be unrelated to the skills it is meant to establish. Here are some examples:

Teacher's Question	Student's Response
Do you read much?	*Yes, I read much.*
Do you cook very much?	*Yes, I cook very much.*
Ask her what the last film she saw was called.	*What was called the last film you saw?*
What was she saying?	*She saying she would ask him.*
What does she tell him?	*She tell him to hurry.*
What's he doing?	*He opening the door.*
Ask her how long it takes.	*How long it takes?*
Will they soon be ready?	*Yes, they soon be ready.*
How much does it cost?	*It cost one dollar.*
What does he have to do?	*He have to do write the address.*
What does he ask his mother?	*He ask his mother for the address.*

As the above sample illustrates, when a question is used to elicit sentences, the answer often has to be corrected by the teacher to counteract the influence of his question. Some course-books proceed almost entirely through the use of questions; others avoid excessive use of questions by utilising signals to indicate the type of sentence required. These may reduce the total number of deviant sentences produced.

False concepts hypothesised

In addition to the wide range of intralingual errors which have to do with faulty rule-learning at various levels, there is a class of developmental errors which derive from faulty comprehension of distinctions in the target language. These are sometimes due to poor gradation of teaching items. The form *was*, for example, may be interpreted as a marker of the past tense, giving *one day it was happened* (table I, 2) and *is* may be understood to be the corresponding marker of the present tense: *he is speaks French* (table I, 1). In table II, 4 we find the continuous form instead of the simple past in narrative; elsewhere we encounter confusion between *too*, *so*, and *very*, between *come* and *go*, and so on. In particular instances I have traced errors of this

sort to classroom presentation, and to presentation which is based on contrastive analysis of English and another language or on contrasts within English itself.

Here is an example of how the present continuous came to be understood as a narrative tense. The simple present tense in English is the normal tense used for actions seen as a whole, for events which develop according to a plan, or for sequences of events taking place at the present moment.[1] Thus the sports commentator's *Now Anderson takes the ball, passes it to Smith . . .* and the cooking demonstrator's *I take two eggs, now I add the sugar. . . .* How do we find this use represented in textbooks for teaching English as a second language?

Typically one finds that the continuous form has been used for these functions instead. A recent audio-visual course contains many sequences like the following: *The lift is going down to the ground floor. Ted is getting out of the lift. He is leaving the office building. Ted is standing at the entrance of the office building. He is looking up at the sky . . .*

This is not a normal use of English. The usual tense for a sequence of events taking place 'at the moment' is the present tense, the continuous tense being used only when a single event is extracted from a sequence, the sequence itself being indicated by the present forms. This presentation of the continouus form led a number of students to assume that the continuous form in English is a tense for telling stories and for describing successions of events in either the present or the past.

The reasons for the occurrence of untypical verb-uses in many course-books appears to be related to a contrastive approach to language teaching. In this example, the course-designer has attempted to establish the use of the continuous form in a context in which the present form is appropriate. It is often felt that a considerable amount of time should be devoted to the continuous form, since it does not exist in most learner's mother tongues. Excessive attention to points of difference at the expense of realistic English is a characteristic of much contrastive-based teaching. My experience of such teaching confirms Ritchie's prediction: 'A course that concentrates too much on "the main trouble spots" without due attention to the structure of the foreign language as a whole, will leave the learner with a patchwork of unfruitful, partial generalisations. . . .'[2]

Many courses progress on a related assumption, namely,

[1]W. H. Hirtle, *The Simple and Progressive Forms*, Quebec: Laval U.P., 1967, pp. 40–1. R. A. Close, 'Concerning the Present Tense', *English Language Teaching*, Vol. 13, 1959, p. 59.

[2]William C. Ritchie, 'Some Implications of Generative Grammar', *Language Learning*, 17, p. 129.

that contrasts within the language are an essential aid to learning. 'Presenting items in contrast can lighten the teacher's and the student's work and consequently speed up the learning process.'[1] Here are some examples of actual learning from materials thought out in terms of contrast.

George notes that a frequent way of introducing the simple and continuous forms is to establish the contrast:

is = present state, *is* + *ing* = present action.[2]

The contrast is in fact quite false to English. When the past is introduced, it is often introduced as a past state. *He was sick.* This lays the groundwork for the learner to complete the picture of present and past in English by analogy:

is = present state, *is* + *ing* = present action,
was = past state ∴ *was* + *ing* = past action.

Thus *was* or *was* + *ing* may be used as past markers. Used together with the verb + *ed* this produces such sentences as *he was climbed the tree.* Interpreted as the form for 'past actions' it gives *I was going down town yesterday* instead of *I went down town yesterday.*

Table III shows examples of the confusion of *too*, *so*, and *very*. Other substitutions are common, such as the use of *teach* for *learn*, of *do* for *make*, of *come* for *go*, of *bring* for *take*. Learners often feel that the members of such pairs are synonyms, despite every attempt to demonstrate that they have contrastive meanings. Such confusion is sometimes attributable to premature contrastive presentation.

Here are the occurrences of *too* and *very* in a first reader which tells the story of a group of children who light a fire in the snow in front of an old house: *The house is empty because it's old . . . I'm very cold. England is too cold . . . The fire is very big . . . It's very big. It's a very big fire. The firemen are going to put water on the fire because it's too big.*

The course designers intended to establish a contrast between *too* and *very*, but in so doing they completely confuse the meaning of the two forms. From the presentation—and from the view-point of a young learner—they have the same meanings. Thus we have the parallelism between:

> *It's too big and it's dangerous.*
> *The fire is dangerous. It's very big.*

How could a child, following such a presentation, avoid saying

[1]Ruth Hok, 'Contrast: An Effective Teaching Device', *English Language Teaching*, 17, 3, p. 118.
[2]H. V. 'George, Teaching Simple Past and Past Perfect', *Bulletin of the Central Institute of English* (Hyderabad, India), No. 2, pp. 18–31.

This is a too big house? Too would be more safely taught out of association with *very*, and in contexts where it did not appear to be a substitute for *very*, as, for example, in a structure with *too* + adjective + infinitive—*this box is too heavy to lift*.

Other courses succeed in establishing confusion between *too*, *so*, and *very* by offering exercises like these:

1. Reword the following sentences, using *too*. *This coffee is so hot that I can't drink it. I've got so fat that I can't wear this dress now* . . .

Example: *This soup is very hot. I can't drink it. This soup is too hot (for me) to drink.*

2. Remake these sentences using *too*. *This hat is very big; he's only a little boy. This grammar is very difficult; a child can't understand it.*

This type of exercise leads to the errors in table III, 4. The common confusion of *since* and *for* (table IV, 4) is sometimes reinforced by similar exercises, such as those which require choosing the correct preposition in sentences like:

> *I have been here (for/since) a week.*
> *We have been in Canada (for/since) 1968.*

Constant attempts to contrast related areas of English can thus have quite different results from those we intend. As yet, there is no substantial confirmation that a contrastive approach to teaching is likely to be *a priori* more effective than any other approach. Classroom experience and common sense often suggest that a safer strategy for instruction is to minimise opportunities for confusion by selecting non-synonymous contexts for related words, by treating them at different times, and by avoiding exercises based on contrast and transformation.

Conclusions

An analysis of the major types of intralingual and developmental errors—over-generalisation, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, and the building of false systems or concepts—may lead us to examine our teaching materials for evidence of the language-learning assumptions that underlie them. Many current teaching-practices are based on the notion that the learner will photographically reproduce anything that is given to him, and that if he does not, it is hardly the business of the teacher or textbook writer. It has been remarked that 'Very surprisingly there are few published descriptions of how or what children learn. There are plenty of descriptions of what the teacher did and what materials were presented to the children, but little about what mistakes the children made and how these can be explained, or of what generalisations and learning

strategies the children seem to be developing. . . . It may be that the child's strategy of learning is totally or partially independent of the methods by which he is being taught.'[1]

Interference from the mother tongue is clearly a major source of difficulty in second-language learning, and contrastive analysis has proved valuable in locating areas of interlanguage interference. Many errors, however, derive from the strategies employed by the learner in language acquisition, and from the mutual interference of items within the target language. These cannot be accounted for by contrastive analysis. Teaching techniques and procedures should take account of the structural and developmental conflicts that can come about in language learning.

APPENDIX

Tables I–VI—Typical Intralingual and Developmental Errors

Table I

Errors in the Production of Verb Groups

1.	*be + verb stem* for *verb stem*
	We are live in this hut The sentence is occurs . . . We are hope . . . He is speaks French The telegraph is remain . . . We are walk to school every day.
2.	*be + verb stem + ed* for *verb stem + ed*
	Farmers are went to their houses He was died last year One day it was happened They are opened the door
3.	wrong form after *do*
	He did not found . . . He did not agreed . . . The man does not cares for his life He did not asks me He does not has . . .

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[1] J. Dakin, 'The Teaching of Reading', *Applied Linguistics and the Teaching of English*. Ed. by Fraser and O'Donnell, Longmans, 1969, pp. 107–11.

4.	Wrong form after modal verb
	Can be regard as ... We can took him out I can saw it It can drawing heavy loads They can used it It can use in state processions She cannot goes She cannot to go They would became We must made We can to see We must worked hard
5.	*be* omitted before *verb + stem + ed* (participle)
	He born in England It used in church during processions They satisfied with their lot He disgusted He reminded of the story
6.	*ed* omitted after *be + participle verb stem*
	The sky is cover with clouds He was punish Some trees are uproot
7.	*be* omitted before *verb + ing*
	They running very fast The cows also crying The industry growing fast At 10.30 he going to kill the sheep
8.	*verb stem* for *stem + s*
	He alway talk a lot He come from India She speak German as well

Table II

Errors in the Distribution of Verb Groups

1.	*be + verb + ing* for *be + verb + ed*
	I am interesting in that The country was discovering by Columbus
2.	*be + verb + ing* for *verb stem*
	She is coming from Canada I am having my hair cut on Thursdays

3.	be + not + verb + ing for do + not + verb
	I am not liking it Correct rules are not existing In French we are not having a present continuous tense and we are not knowing when to use it
4.	be + verb + ing for verb + ed in narrative
	. . . in the afternoon we were going back. On Saturday we were going down town, and we were seeing a film and after we were meeting my brother
5.	verb stem for verb + ed in narrative
	There were two animals who do not like each other. One day they go into a wood and there is no water. The monkey says to the elephant . . .
6.	have + verb + ed for verb + ed
	They had arrived just now He had come today I have written this letter yesterday Some weeks ago I have seen an English film He has arrived at noon I have learned English at school
7.	have + be + verb + ed for be + verb + ed
	He has been married long ago He has been killed in 1956
8.	verb (+ ed) for have + verb + ed
	We correspond with them up to now This is the only country which I visited so far
9.	be + verb + ed for verb stem
	This money is belonged to me The machine is comed from France

Table III

Miscellaneous Errors

1.	Wrong verb form in adverb of time
	I shall meet him before the train will go We must wait here until the train will return

2.	Object omitted or included unnecessarily
	We saw him play football and we admired This is not fit to drink it This is the king's horse which he rides it every day That is the man who I saw him
3.	Errors in tense sequence
	He said that there is a boy in the garden When the evening came we go to the pictures When I came back I am tired
4.	Confusion of *too, so, very*
	I am very lazy to stay at home I am too tired that I cannot work I am very tired that I cannot go When I first saw him he was too young Honey is too much sweet The man became so exhausted and fell on the floor

Table IV

Errors in the Use of Prepositions

1.	*with* instead of	Ø *from* *against* *of* *at*	met with her, married with her suffering with a cold fight with tyranny consist with laughed with my words
2.	*in* instead of	Ø *on* *with* *for* *at* *to* *by*	entered in the room, in the next day in T.V. fallen in love in Ophelia in this purpose in this time go in Poland the time in your watch
3.	*at* instead of	Ø *by* *in* *to* *for*	reached at a place, at last year held him at the left arm at the evening; interested at it went at Stratford at the first time
4.	*for* instead of	Ø *in* *of* *from* *since*	serve for God one bath for seven days suspected for, the position for Chinese coolies a distance for one country to another been here for the 6th of June

5.	*on* instead of	Ø	played on the piano for an hour
		in	on many ways, on that place, going on cars
		at	on the end
		with	angry on him
		of	countries on the world
		to	pays attention on it
6.	*of* instead of	Ø	aged of 44, drink less of wine
		in	rich of vitamins
		by	book of Hardy
		on	depends of civilisation
		for	a reason of it
7.	*to* instead of	Ø	join to them, went to home, reached to the place
		for	an occupation to them
		of	his love to her

Table V

Errors in the Use of Articles

1.	Omission of *the*	
	(a) before unique nouns	Sun is very hot
		Himalayas are . . .
	(b) before nouns of nationality	Spaniards and Arabs . . .
	(c) before nouns made particular in context	At the conclusion of article
		She goes to bazaar every day
	(d) before a noun modified by a participle	She is mother of that boy
		Solution given in this article
	(e) before superlatives	Richest person
	(f) before a noun modified by an *of-phrase*	Institute of Nuclear Physics
	the used instead of Ø	
	(a) before proper names	The Shakespeare, the Sunday
	(b) before abstract nouns	The friendship, the nature, the science
	(c) before nouns behaving like abstract nouns	After the school, after the breakfast
	(d) before plural nouns	The complex structures are still developing
	(e) before *some*	The some knowledge
	a used instead of *the*	
	(a) before superlatives	a worst, a best boy in the class
	(b) before unique nouns	a sun becomes red

4.	*a* instead of Ø	
	(a) before a plural noun qualified by an adjective	a holy places, a human beings, a bad news
	(b) before uncountables	a gold, a work
	(c) before an adjective	... taken as a definite
5.	omission of *a*	
	before class nouns defined by adjectives	he was good boy he was brave man

Table VI
Errors in the Use of Questions

1.	Omission of inversion
	What was called the film? How many brothers she has? What she is doing? When she will be 15? Why this man is cold? Why streets are as bright as day?
2.	*be* omitted before *verb + ing*
	When Jane coming? What she doing? What he saying?
3.	Omission of *do*
	Where it happened? How it looks like? Why you went? How you say it in English How much it costs? How long it takes? What he said?
4.	Wrong form of auxiliary, or wrong form after auxiliary
	Do he go there? Did he went? Did he finished? Do he comes from your village? Which road did you came by?
5.	Inversion omitted in embedded sentences
	Please write down what is his name. I told him I do not know how old was it I don't know how many are there in the box

Contrastive Linguistics and the Teaching of English as a Second or Foreign Language[1]

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MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN not only on the desirability, but also on the efficacy of contrastive studies in the teaching of English as a second or foreign language. This present paper has two purposes: to point out certain weaknesses in the existing approaches and to suggest a new approach that may make contrastive analysis more efficacious. On the one hand it will be shown that neither of the two major existing approaches is adequate; and on the other hand it will be suggested that a union rather than an opposition of the two major approaches will result in a new approach, making contrastive analysis maximally relevant to the teaching of English as a second or foreign language. What is argued for throughout is a dynamic approach, based on a more practical approach.

This suggested new approach does not depend merely on theoretical and descriptive constructs resulting from the comparison and contrast of the grammars of two languages (source and target). Rather its starting point is the (target) language text produced by the second- or foreign-language learner/user. This text is analysed and then compared and contrasted with the standard (target) language text of the native speaker. The results are finally related to the first language of the second/foreign-language learner. Throughout, the ideas and techniques of descriptive and applied linguistics are used. Thus, for example, in terms of theory, 'text' here is idealised and the grammar resulting from the explication of the 'text' will be the grammar of the entire language it represents and not just the grammar coterminous with the finite text. That is to say, intuition is involved in the explication throughout.

Weaknesses in the Existing Approaches

There are two principal existing attitudes to 'contrastive analysis', with particular reference to its usefulness in the teaching

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[1]This paper arises from a recent study, *The Linguistic Problems of Yoruba Learners and Users of English*, London University, Ph.D. thesis, 1968. This is why many of the examples are drawn from Yoruba and the situation of the Yoruba learner of English. Yoruba is one of the main languages of Nigeria, spoken by 13 million people (according to the 1963 census). It is a language also spoken in the neighbouring country of Dahomey.

of English as a second/foreign language. These two attitudes can be represented by the views expressed by F. R. Palmer and W. Haas at the conference on university training and research in the teaching of English as a second/foreign language held at Nutford House, London, in 1960. F. R. Palmer said: 'I am not myself in favour, as many people are, of making a comparison of English with some African or Asian language, because it seems that the two are not comparable. But it is important that we should be able to describe the sort of English that results from the African or the Asian learning English. We should be able and willing to describe the West African or the Siamese English.'[1] W. Haas said, among other things: 'What is required seems to be a large number of specialised comparative studies in English/Bengali, English/Japanese, English/Hausa, and so on, attacking each of these tasks with a series of monographs: on the phonemes, the prosodic features, syllable structure, phonological markers, the structure of words, the principal type of phrase and so on. In this way, we should eventually overcome the handicap which results from dispensing a uniform English for foreigners. At present, we tend to treat our students rather like a physiotherapist, who, having to treat one patient with a pain in his back, another with a pain in his leg, and a third with a pain in his neck, tries to put all through the same set of exercises.'[2]

Palmer seems to suggest that 'contrastive analysis' is not practicable, whereas Haas seems to hold the opposite view, that it is not only practicable but also indispensable. Between these two extreme views there are some more cautious opinions.[3]

It would seem that Palmer is right in emphasising the need for describing 'the sort of English that results from the African or Asian learning English' and that he is to some extent right in being sceptical about the efficacy of the type of 'specialised comparative studies' being advocated as a panacea by Haas.

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[1]See F. R. Palmer: 'Contemporary English Language and General Linguistics', *English Teaching Abroad and the British Universities*, edited by H. G. Wayment, p. 32.

[2]See W. Haas: 'Research Problems', in *English Teaching Abroad and the British Universities*, p. 50.

[3]Cf. A. Baird, in *English Language Teaching*, XXI, 2, January 1967, whose article can be regarded as a cautious appraisal of the usefulness of contrastive analysis. It is hoped that our suggested approach will overcome all the problems raised by his. Cf. also W. R. Lee's 'Thoughts on Contrastive Linguistics in the Context of Language Teaching' in J. E. Alatis (Ed.) *Monograph Series on Languages and Linguistics, Number 21, 1968: Contrastive Linguistics and its Pedagogical Implications*. Though this present paper and Dr Lee's were prepared independently, it is interesting to note that they have a lot in common.

It would seem that such a comparative analysis[1] (henceforth referred to as 'classical contrastive analysis') assumes that the actual linguistic problems that the second language has are in one-to-one correspondence with differences in patterns between the two languages involved. But it can be shown that this assumption claims too strong a predictive power for classical contrastive analysis, which is essentially a 'static' approach that isolates and petrifies each potential problem without necessary integration and without practical reference to real language-learning situations, monolingual and bilingual.

On the one hand, because the predictions are not made with reference to actual situations of learning the target language as a first and then as a second/foreign language, classical contrastive analysis seems to make the assertion that all the problems the second/foreign-language learner has are those that can be referred to as 'bilingual' ones. But this assertion overlooks the fact that the second/foreign-language learner of English, for example, would have not only some peculiar bilingual problems but also linguistic problems inherent in English, the linguistic problems that the English child also has in learning English. For instance, it seems right to suggest that both the Yoruba learner of English and the British child learning English would face the problems that lead to the spelling of *forty* as ×*fourty* and the use ×*hurted* as past tense of *hurt*. Thus these can be called 'general linguistic problems' faced by the second/foreign-language learner of English. To deny that such 'general linguistic problems' exist is to deny the conscious and unconscious efforts made by parents and teachers in Britain to get British children to acquire English grammar[2] as well as facility in the various registers of English appropriate on different occasions, or, to take another example, to refuse to see anything of linguistic interest in the graphological deviation evident in the spelling of *using* as ×*useing* in a London launderette notice: 'This dryer is for only[3] people useing our washing machine.'

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[1]See for example Schachter's Ph.D. thesis on *A Contrastive Study of English and Pangasinian* or the Contrastive Structure series—on English in contrast with French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish—of the Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, D.C.

[2]It is usual to refer to children's learning of the grammar of their mother tongue without formal instruction or conscious awareness of this grammar. But it should also be remembered that parents, teachers, friends, and relatives usually perform more decisive and active roles. Besides providing the model, they correct the wrong generalised structural rules; for example, rules concerning tense and number in English.

[3]Some people would consider that there is also a grammatical deviation in the position of *only*.

On the other hand, even in the area of the bilingual problems on which it concentrates, classical contrastive analysis does not seem to be effective enough as a guide in the teaching of English as a second or foreign language. This is because classical contrastive analysis glosses over the intricate relationship between the linguistic and non-linguistic problems faced by the second/foreign-language learner. And this failure to recognise and analyse the interrelationship of linguistic and non-linguistic problems produces two major signs of ineffectiveness.

Firstly, there is not only a failure to pinpoint certain learning difficulties but also the prediction of problems that never materialise. As, for example, A. Baird has pointed out,[1] the non-linguistic problems cannot be predicted by classical contrastive analysis. And as, for example, U. Weinreich has pointed out:[2] '... But not all potential forms of interference actually materialise. The precise effect of bilingualism on a person's speech varies with a great many other factors, some of which might be called extra-linguistic because they lie beyond the structural differences of the languages, or even the lexical inadequacies.'

The second major weakness of classical contrastive analysis arising from the failure to pay due attention to the relationship between linguistic and non-linguistic problems is the manner in which it disproportionately makes various linguistic differences between two languages assume equal status as far as their problem-causing potentialities are concerned. This weakness is shown in three principal ways. Firstly, complicated problems are predicted to be simple by neglecting some aspects of those problems. For example, in a second- or foreign-language learning situation where the source language (henceforth referred to as SL) and the target language (TL) have been in contact for a sufficiently long time to enable the SL to borrow from the TL, no special consideration is given to the influence of loan words in the acquisition of the TL, particularly in areas relating to the original words borrowed.

Problems predicted in such areas are similar to those predicted for comparable areas with no loan words, whereas a study of the linguistic problems of Yoruba learners and users of English suggests that areas with loan words present special problems. Thus, for example, the structure of English *slipper* in Yoruba-users' English (henceforth referred to as Yoruba English) shows features more characteristic of Yoruba features than *slipping*, because *slipper* has been borrowed into Yoruba as /silikpa/.

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[1] See A. Baird, *op. cit.* See also W. R. Lee, *op. cit.* particularly pp. 187–9.
[2] See U. Weinreich: *Languages in Contact*, Mouton 1963 (originally published as Number 1 in the series 'Publications of the Linguistic Circle of New York, 1953), p. 3.

Similarly, words like *Ben*, *pen* and *pan* which have been borrowed as /bɛ́:ní/, pɛ́:nì/ and pâ:nû/ tend to be dissyllabic in Yoruba English, whereas words like *ten*, *ran*, *pet*, and *ban* do not.

Next, the linguistic problems arising from the systemic and structural differences are usually not weighted. Besides the fact that problems of grammaticality and appropriateness of register are not differentiated primarily and in delicacy, the impression is given that differences result in difficulties of equal gravity, since no ranking of the problems is attempted. However, the study on which this paper is based shows that wholly different structures cause fewer problems than partly different structures. For example, the structure of the singular-countable nominal group in English (wholly different from that of Yoruba) presents a less difficult problem to the Yoruba learner than that of the uncountable nominal group (only partly different). In fact, the study suggests that it is possible to propose a scale of diffi- culties for the Yoruba learner of English (as an example of the second-language learner of English in general). Least difficulty seems to be given where there is full correspondence of the systems and structures of the two languages, the SL and the TL. Then come those areas where the systems and structures of the two languages are completely different. Then those areas where they are slightly different, the slight difference being that Yoruba (SL) makes fine distinctions not made in English (TL). Then come those areas where they are slightly different, but the slight difference is that English (TL) makes fine distinctions not made in Yoruba (SL). And the most difficult are those areas where the systems and/or structures of the two languages are partly different but where there are very complex criss-cross correspond- ences, with the result that the Yoruba (SL) systems and structures (in most cases structures) may be wrongly equated with English (TL) ones. Perhaps it should be noted here that all these sugges- tions are consonant with well-known ideas on the psychology of learning, particularly on the effects of 'transfer'—proactive, positive, or negative.[1] Indeed, it is true to say that ranking of the second-language learner's problems necessarily involves the consideration of non-linguistic factors, which lie outside classical contrastive analysis. Thirdly, classical contrastive analysis does not usually separate, for example, the linguistic problems of the Yoruba learner of English from those of the English learner of Yoruba. But it seems that the systemic and structural differences between the two languages may sometimes lead to linguistic

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[1]For a description of these various categories of 'transfer' see, for example, I. M. L. Hunter: *Memory*, Penguin 1957, p. 97: 'Categories of Interaction (a) and (b)'.

problems for the Yoruba learner of English only, sometimes for the English learner of Yoruba only, and sometimes for both learners. For example, where there is a 'many-one' relationship between Yoruba (SL) and English (TL), there may be no linguistic problems for the Yoruba (SL) learner of English (TL), whereas in such a situation the English learner of Yoruba would have problems. Such a situation is provided by the relationship between Yoruba /bê-rè/(ask) and /bi/(ask) and English *ask*, where the two Yoruba items correspond to a single English item. Yoruba English shows no grammatical deviation in this area, whereas the Yoruba of a boy for whom English was virtually the mother tongue showed deviations of the type 'mo bêrè mummy' (I ask mummy) instead of 'mo bi mummy'. On the other hand, if the relationship between Yoruba (SL) and English (TL) is a 'one-many' relationship, the learner of English would have linguistic problems and the English learner of Yoruba would not. Such a situation is provided by the relationship between Yoruba 'ní' and English *at, on,* and *in.* Again, even where there is partial correspondence such that only one comparative item is found in either language, the problem-causing results may be different for the two types of learner. Two examples may be cited. Yoruba 'dúpé' is comparable to English *thank* and there is no deviation in Yoruba English reflecting any difference between the two, but there are deviations of the type 'mo dúpé yin' (I thank you) in the Yoruba of the boy earlier referred to. Yet the comparative clause structure is such that Yoruba has 'subject + predicator (dúpé) + prepositional phrase i.e. preposition + nominal (as the direct object)' and English has 'subject + predicator (thank) + nominal (as the direct object).' Similarly, Yoruba 'àwọn' (they) is comparable to English *they.* But while Yoruba 'àwọn' (they) is also an honorific term, English *they* is not. Consequently, Yoruba English has the deviant element *they* referring to a single person (for example, used in reference to a headmaster by his pupil), and English Yoruba is characterised by register deviations where 'àwọn' in an item such as 'àwọn baba' (father) is left out.

Again, there are two important factors affecting the adequacy (predictive power, in terms of locating areas of linguistic problems) of contrastive analysis which are not usually considered. The first concerns the influence of the linguistic theory adopted. An example of the influence of one's theory on one's conclusions is provided by the two quotations from F. R. Palmer and W. Haas at the beginning of this paper. It seems fair to suggest that Palmer's rejection of contrastive analysis on the ground that it is impracticable, and the implicit assumption of Haas that it is practicable, derive from different theories of linguistic

structure.[1] The influence of one's linguistic theory in this respect
is not limited to one's admission or rejection of the possibility
of contrastive analysis. It seems true to say that a 'constituent
structure' theory (to use Postal's[2] terms), or one that has only
surface grammar (to use Halliday's terms[3]) will recognise more
differences between two languages than a theory that has both
deep and surface grammar.[4] Secondly, there is the influence
of the type of linguistic description of the individual languages
adopted as the basis of the contrastive analysis. For example,
if one adopted a description of Yoruba phonology that recognises
no diphthong,[5] one would show more phonological difference
between Yoruba and English than if one adopted a phonological
description of Yoruba that did.[6] Similarly, for example, the
adoption of a Yoruba grammar[7] that sees the primary structure
of the nominal group as 'head + qualifier' would result in the
recognition of more differences between Yoruba and English
than the adoption of a description that sees the primary structures
as 'modifier + head + qualifier' (as for English).[8]

Yet in spite of the inadequacies of classical contrastive analysis,
the work from which this paper arises suggests that Palmer's
alternative proposal cannot adequately replace it. In the first
place, this alternative is not possible in a completely new 'English
as a second/foreign language' learning situation, that is, a place
where English (TL) has not been much used by the speech
community to which the would-be learners belong. Secondly,
even in an old 'English as a second/foreign language' learning
situation, such as the Yoruba speech-community that forms the

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[1]We take S. M. Lamb's view in 'Epilegomena to a Theory of Language',
Romance Philology, Vol. xix., No. 4, 1966, p. 532. 'It is impossible to describe
language without some theory of linguistic structure, even if it is only
partially articulated. Every linguistic description presupposes a linguistic
theory.'

[2]See P. Postal: *Constituent Structure*. Mouton and Co. 1964; also *IJAL*
Vol. 30, No. 1, 1964.

[3]See M. A. K. Halliday: 'Some Notes on Deep Grammar', *Journal of
Linguistics*, Vol. 2. No. 1, 1966 and 'Notes on Transitivity and Theme in
English', Parts 1 and 2, *Journal of Linguistics*, Vol. 3, Nos. 1 and 2, 1967.

[4]Cf. C. F. Hockett's statement in *Universals of Languages*, edited by J. H.
Greenberg, M.I.T. 1963, p. 20. 'Human languages differ more widely in
cenematics (cf. Halliday's 'surface grammar' or 'structures') than in plere-
matics' (cf. Halliday's 'deep grammar' or 'systems').

[5]See R. C. Abraham: *Dictionary of Modern Yoruba*, University of London
Press, 1958, p. xxl.

[6]See A. Afolayan: *The Linguistic Problems of Yoruba Learners and Users of
English*, London University Ph.D. thesis, 1968, pp. 62–80. (A forthcoming
article will present the same view.)

[7]See A. Bamgbose: *A Grammar of Yoruba, ibid*, p. 98.

[8]See A. Afolayan: *ibid*. pp. 435–9. (A forthcoming paper will present the
same view.)

basis of the work from which this paper arises, such a description of English (i.e. of Yoruba English) cannot, in respect of pinpointing linguistic problems, adequately be an end in itself, but only a means to an end (what the end should be will be the subject of the next section of this paper). The major reason for this is that the Yoruba learner of English has not only positive problems (so to speak) but also negative ones. 'Positive problems' are those reflected in Yoruba English by deviations, and 'negative problems' are those not so reflected. Negative problems are generally revealed by the user's avoidance in his English of the problematic structures and items. For example, Yoruba English does not represent the imperative, non-jussive, optative, 'zero' clause—so we have *John give the first lecture* in contrast with *Let John give the first lecture*. Occasionally, too, these problems may also be reflected through what is generally unobservable in linguistic structure. This is a psycholinguistic aspect of such problems. For example, a Yoruba-speaker will use the words *snow* and *frost* correctly in his geography lesson, even though he attaches inadequate concepts to them.[1] Consequently, a description of Yoruba English cannot reveal such problems: mere absence of such features is not enough evidence, since it can be assumed that no dialect of a language (Yoruba English can be seen as a dialect of English) can be expected to contain all possible systems and structures of the language.

A New Approach

The basic suggestion of this paper involves a union of the opposed views of F. R. Palmer and W. Haas quoted at the beginning. This suggestion has two parts, related to the notions 'new/old English-as-a-second/foreign-language learning situations' earlier mentioned.

It has already been suggested that the description of, for example, Yoruba English is best regarded as a means to an end and not as an end in itself. The proposed end is a dynamic and practical contrastive analysis. In other words, Yoruba English should form the basis of a contrastive analysis whereby its characteristics, with particular reference to how it deviates from standard English, are explained in terms of the respective systems and structures of Yoruba and English. From a full description of Yoruba English we should be able to see what non-linguistic factors contribute to its characteristics; for example,

[1] Cf. J. B. Gladstone in 'An Experiential Approach to the Teaching of English as a Second Language', *English Language Teaching* XXI, 3, 1967, p. 230: 'Vocabulary items that are not based upon real and meaningful experiences in the new systems, we found, are never truly understood by the child.'

the tradition of English usage in Western Nigeria accounts for the use of *principal* for *headmaster* and *student* for *pupil* to refer respectively to the head and the pupil of a secondary school. In explaining the characteristics of Yoruba English in this way we would be able to outline the psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, and descriptive linguistic aspects of the explanation of the problems underlying the deviations. For example, the use of *they* in Yoruba English to refer to only one person, as earlier mentioned, can be related to sociolinguistic factors giving rise to honorific language. Similarly, the deviant spelling of *forty* as ×*fourty* and *rung* as ×*rong* can be related to psycholinguistics as well as descriptive linguistics. ×*Fourty* for *forty* illustrates a general problem (as earlier described) whereby ×*fourty* is made out of *four* and *-ty*, like *sixty*, *seventy*, and *ninety*, whereas ×*rong* for *rung* illustrates a bilingual problem arising from analogous graphic representation of /ɔ/ by 'o' and the influence of Yoruba phonology (Yoruba has no central vowels, so /ʌ/ is usually replaced by /ɔ/ in Yoruba English).

To complete our picture of the approach, we suggest that in a completely 'new English-as-a-second/foreign-language learning situation', classical contrastive analysis is the best stop-gap. However, once English (TL) has been established as a language in use for some time, it is advisable that the initial expedient of classical analysis be replaced by a more effective comparative study of the sort just briefly described.[1] This means that in an 'old English-as-a-second/foreign-language learning situation' there is no need for classical contrastive analysis.

It remains only to say that comparative study of the sort analysed here, like any other kind of linguistic description, needs both an adequate linguistic theory (in the case, particularly one with provision for psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic, and descriptive linguistic components) and a linguist who is competent in the TL and a native speaker of the SL (or better still, two such linguists, one a native speaker of the SL and the other a native speaker of the TL). Any analysis done without a sound knowledge of the English-as-a-foreign/second-language learning situation— its people, culture, and linguistic situation (what languages and/or dialects are used by whom and for what purpose)—as well as a sound knowledge of English cannot be adequate.

With the type of comparative study outlined above, it seems that contrastive analysis can become a more powerful tool for the effective teaching of English as a second or foreign language. As is often claimed, it can be an efficient guide in determining

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[1]Limitation of space prevents a fuller discussion and exemplification, but see A. Afolayan, *op. cit.*

syllabus content. With the type of scale of learning difficulties earlier suggested, it would be useful in effective grading and staging of the syllabus material selected, particularly as one applies such well-tried educational principles of proceeding, for example, from the 'known' to the 'unknown', the 'easy' to the 'difficult', and the 'simple' to the 'complex'. This will then mean that it can guide in the making of adequate course-books. And, above all, it can be useful in an area where it has not been usual to look for any help from contrastive linguistics, namely, presentation.[1] This is because in this type of comparative analysis the role of translation and transference in the acquisition of a foreign or second language becomes clarified. Thus this type of analysis is relevant to a more objective appraisal of translation/direct method in second-or-foreign-language teaching and learning.

From Syntax to Semantics[2]

L. A. HILL

I HAVE FOUND transformational-generative grammar of the greatest help in my work, because it provides a systematic framework for things which I have been doing by rule of thumb ever since I started work on syntactical grading in 1947. But I think the time has now come for those whose primary interest is in language teaching to move on to something more meaning-centred.

The transformational-generative school put more emphasis on semantics than the structuralists did, because contrasts in deep structure depend to a considerable extent on contrasts in meaning. But they still approach language very much from the formal end, and concentrate their main attention on formal distinctions. Anyone who has examined the tree diagrams they produce, and the strings of symbols which they use, will be reminded of pure mathematics, formal logic, and such like, rather than of

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[1] Cf. A. Bamgbose in *West African Journal of Education*, xl. (1967), p. 154: 'It does not enter into the presentation of language material in the classroom, except in so far as the textbook has been based on the information derived from a contrastive study of the second language and the pupils' language or languages.'

[2] This article is based on a paper given at the third annual conference of the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language, held in London, December 1969.

psychology, sociology, and the humanities. The danger is still that the ordinary language-teacher, who is simply trying to teach his pupils a new language for communication, will be so dazzled by the scholars and research workers that he will try to teach through tree diagrams and strings of symbols instead of using these only as a help in getting his own ideas about the language he is teaching straight, before he goes into the classroom.

Even the textbook writer and the syllabus-maker will be in danger of producing a nonsense if they allow themselves to be too much influenced by the transformational-generative school. I do not think that the analyses they have produced can be a good exclusive guide for the selection and grading of what is to be taught, any more than they can be a good exclusive guide for the methodology. The textbook writer and the syllabus-maker must still be eclectic, ready to use the work of the psychologist, the methodologist, the structuralist, and others, as well as that of the transformational-generative scholar. We will find that much is useful in the work of the latter, both at the levels of selection and grading, and at that of methodology; but we will be in danger of losing touch with the classroom situation if we allow ourselves to become too tied to any one school of dogma.

Transformational-generative syntax can be used with the least dilution among intelligent adult students who have well-developed analytical powers; and it has to be diluted most with children before the age of puberty, who have a wonderful facility for learning a language accurately and effortlessly if it is used incidentally while they are doing things they find interesting, like drawing, colouring, and cutting things out. At this stage a knowledge of transformational-generative grammar on the part of the teacher or textbook writer is of minimal importance although it *can* sometimes help to arrange the linguistic content of the pupils' activities in ways which will make it as easy as possible for them to learn. Once, however, linguistic considerations are allowed to outweigh the interest of small children's non-linguistic activities in the classroom, the teaching becomes sterilely formal, and therefore unlikely to be successful.

For small children, I am convinced that a course which is built around interesting activities, and in which linguistic considerations are of secondary importance, will be much more successful than one which starts from a linguistic grading.

This brings me back to the question of semantics. If one is going to grade the language in a course carefully, so that the pupils have a chance to learn one thing properly before they have a new one thrust on them, one must have some sort of *principle* for selection. The principle can be a linguistic one; for example, one can start by teaching what the transformational-generative

school call the kernel sentences, the simple patterns from which other more complex ones can gradually be built up; and one can grade the other sentence-types according to the number of transformations which one needs to go through in order to derive them from a kernel sentence. Alternatively, one can have a semantically-based scheme of grading, in which one starts from simple situations which are interesting and useful for the students concerned, teaching the students the language which goes with each of these situations; and in which one goes on, step by step, to produce more and more complex situations by combining simple ones which one has already taught.

This is a synthetic approach—that is, an approach in which one gradually builds up by combining individual situational bricks. One can also approach the thing from the opposite end, replacing synthesis by analysis. Analysis based on semantics instead of on syntax will bring language theory much closer to the practical needs of the teacher in the classroom, who is teaching language for communication and not as an intellectual exercise.

Some American scholars are worried about the inadequacies of transformational-generative linguistics. Wallace Chafe has said 'The inadequacies of generative syntax call for its abandonment in favour of generative semantics'[1], and 'Idiomaticity is an anomaly of the Chomskyan paradigm'[2] (in other words, transformational-generative grammar is weak on dealing with idioms).

Richard Gunter says 'An elliptical sentence (such as the response in the dialogue (*Who can see the boy? The man*) is one capable of expansion to a longer underlying form (*The man can see the boy*) ... Ellipsis has not been studied because one kind of ellipsis is bound up with the grammatical connections among sentences in context, which linguists have largely ignored. Such connections are seen in the use of pronoun substitutes, the behaviour of the primary stress syllables of a sentence, and contextual ellipsis. . . A transformational grammar can say nothing about the conditions in connected discourse that permit this or that elliptical form. We need to study context grammar.'[3]

What the Americans mean by generative semantics and context grammar is not quite the same as what I mean by semantic synthesis and semantic analysis, so I will not expand on what

[1]Chafe, Wallace L. 'Idiomaticity as an anomaly in the Chomskyan paradigm', *Foundations of Language* (Dordrecht), pp. 109–27, 4, 2. 1968.
[2]*Ibid.*
[3]Gunter, Richard. 'Elliptical Sentences in American English', *Lingua* (Amsterdam), pp. 137–50, 12, 2. 1963.

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Chafe and Gunter have said. I quote them merely to show that there is dissatisfaction, even in the United States, with transformational-generative grammar because of its excessive emphasis on form as against meaning.

Of course, semantic synthesis and semantic analysis would no doubt be greeted with hoots of derision by the linguisticians, since they would not be neat, tidy, and subject to rigorous scientific demonstration. This would be because the things which we use language to talk and write about cannot be neatly and tidily labelled and analysed. Real life is continually overflowing the analyst's carefully calibrated test-tubes.

But this does not mean that the language teacher should just wash his hands of the whole problem of teaching his students to use the language as a means of communication about the world around them, instead of merely as a vehicle for tidy little drills aimed only at learning patterns for their own sake; nor does it mean that it is impossible to label and analyse the various elements that go to make up selected, limited areas of meaning, which one can then grade and present to one's students in the same way as other carefully graded material.

Why would semantic synthesis and analysis be more useful to the language teacher than generative syntax? Firstly because, if language is not to be taught as communication, it is not worth teaching at all, except to a few university research workers.

Secondly because, if we want to teach language as communication, we have to consider very carefully what Jerrold Katz calls 'the message to convey'[1], or what Dwight Bolinger calls the 'sense . . . that is already there' before the linguistic context comes into operation[2].

Thirdly, because psychologists stress the importance of meaning for learning a language. John Carroll says, 'The following facts are important: . . . the more meaningful the material, the easier

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[1]Katz, Jerrold J. 'Mentalism in Linguistics', *Language* (Baltimore), pp. 124–37, 40, 2. April–June 1964. Katz says: 'The speaker chooses a message to convey, then uses the sentence production procedure to obtain an abstract syntactic structure having the proper conceptualism of his thought, command, or question as its semantic interpretation. Then the speaker utilises the phonological component of his linguistic description to produce a phonetic shape for it . . . The reverse procedure occurs at the hearer's end.'

[2]Bolinger, Dwight L. 'The uniqueness of the word', *Lingua* (Amsterdam), pp. 113–36, 12, 2. 1963. Bolinger says: 'Structuralists exaggerate the selective role of the context. When we say that the context determines the sense, we mean not that it *imposes* a sense but that it selects one that is already there. The view that there are two ways of acquiring meaning—through continuity with situation at first, then through association with context—pictures two extremes of a single process.'

it is learned and retained; the more kinds of association are made to an item, the better is learning and retention.'
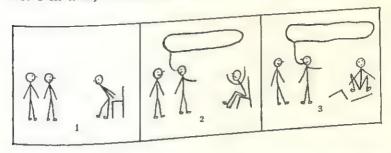
Fourthly, because of the intensely boring nature of formal drills, pattern practice, mim-mem, and the rest. Such drills are at best unnecessary, since it is perfectly possible to have contextualised drills from the beginning.

Semantic *analysis* would analyse situations into their semantic elements, and then see how language represents these. It could also take utterances, find the semantic elements represented in them, and then show *how* the language of the utterance represented each. In other words, one would work from the situational elements to the linguistic elements representing them (morphemes, syntactical patterns, morphological patterns, formulas, and stress and intonation patterns), and from these to the phonological/graphological items of which they are made up.

Take, for example, this set of pictures, of which No. 2 follows No. 1 in time, and No. 3 follows No. 2:

The utterance by the boy in 3 could be: *He has brôken the châir.*

The semantic elements which this utterance represents could be:

1. a person
2. maleness
3. a chair
4. oneness
5. breaking
6. pastness
7. the moment of speaking
8. result
9. factualness
10. the fact of already having been identified
11. the fact of being the doer of an action

12. the fact of being the 'undergoer' of an action
13. the fact of being a statement.

1. *A person* is shown by the selection of *he* instead of *it*.
2. *Maleness* is shown by the selection of *he* instead of *she*.
3. The fact that we are talking about *a chair* is shown by the selection of the word *chair* rather than *table*, *bench*, or something else.
4. The fact that we are talking about *one* is shown by the selection of *he* instead of *they*, of *has* instead of *have*, and of *chair* instead of *chairs* (or, if you prefer, of *–Ø* instead of *–s*).
5. The fact that we are talking about *breaking* is shown by the selection of a form of the verb *break*, instead of, for example, *cut, clean,* or something else.
6. The fact that we are talking about *pastness* is shown by the selection of *has* and the *–en* form of break instead of, for example, *is* and the *–ing* form, or *will* and the *–Ø* form.
7. The fact that the *moment of speaking* is part of the situation is shown by the selection of *has* instead of *had*, or *will have*.
8. The fact that there is an interest in the *result* of the action is shown by the selection of *has* and the *–en* form instead of the *–ed* form (*broke*).
9. The fact that the utterance deals with *fact* not supposition, possibility or something else, is shown by the selection of *has* instead of *would have, may/might have,* or some other form.
10. The fact that the male person has *already been identified* is shown by the selection of *he* instead of *a man, some man,* or some other such expression; and the fact that the chair has already been identified is shown by the selection of *the* instead of *a*.
11. The fact that the male person was the *doer* of the action is shown by the selection of *he* instead of *him*; and by the fact that *he* precedes *has broken* instead of following it.
12. The fact that the chair was the '*undergoer*' of the action is shown by the inclusion of *he* in the utterance, and by the fact that *he* precedes *has broken* (if the utterance had been *The chair has broken*, the chair would still have been the '*undergoer*' of the action).
13. The fact that the utterance is a *statement* is shown by the fact that *he* precedes *has* instead of following it; and by the selection of a falling pitch on *chair* instead of a rising one (this is shown in writing by the selection of a full stop after *chair* instead of a question mark).

Transformationalists pay a lot of attention to ambiguity; but if one teaches situationally, ambiguity does not arise. One teaches *trunk* ; then *trunk* ; then *trunk* . The fact that they are homophones is not a problem.

Similarly with grammatical patterns: such transformational-generative favourites as *John is easy to please* and *John is eager to please* would not be taught simultaneously. After the second has been taught, it would be contrasted with the first. One does not *have* to teach things at the same time just because their surface structure is similar.

Of course, different utterances can sometimes represent practically the same semantic elements; for example, the following utterances can all convey exactly the same information about exactly the same incident:

Jóhn hêlped me.

It was Jóhn that hêlped me.

I was hêlped by Jóhn.

It was by Jóhn that I was hêlped.

Jóhn gâve me the hêlp.

It was Jóhn that gâve me the hêlp.

It was from Jóhn that I gôt the hêlp.

In analysing semantic elements, we need to include emotions which the speaker/writer is trying to convey; and we also have to include emotions which the speaker/writer is trying to arouse in the listener/reader—emotions such as anger, sadness, scorn, sympathy, amusement and so on.

Like generative syntax, semantic synthesis and analysis would have to start from very simple situations, composed of a very few elements. It would have to build up to the most complex ones which the teacher wanted to include in his course by combining the simple situations. For example, a picture of a man looking at black clouds and saying *It may rain* can be combined with one of a man looking at a wet street and saying *It has rained* to produce a picture of a man looking at a wet street and saying *It may have rained*.

Semantic synthesis and analysis would rely heavily on contrast both semantic and structural/lexical. As John Carroll says: 'The frequency with which an item is practised is not as crucial as the frequency with which it is contrasted with items with which it may be confused.'[3]

Semantic synthesis and analysis could be used as tools for examining how a child learns its mother tongue; and they could be used to compare languages with each other, to show how each represents particular semantic elements. W. R. Lee says 'What is to be found at one level of analysis in one language is not necessarily to be found at the same level in another. For instance, what is said lexically may be expressed through phonology or syntax and vice versa.'[4]

Semantic synthesis and analysis could also be used to help in translation, which basically consists of extracting the semantic elements represented in L_1 and then re-presenting them in L_2; they could be used to prepare a *semantically* graded programme for teaching a foreign language—a course in which we start from the situations which we want to talk about, and not from the language which we use to talk about situations; and they could be used to train both L_1 and L_2 students to become more deeply and accurately aware of the ways in which particular authors use language to convey information, feelings, and attitudes, and to arouse responses in their listeners/readers (this would, of course, also help students to use the language concerned more effectively themselves).

One great advantage of a semantic approach over an approach

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[3] *Ibid.*
[4] Lee, W. R. 'Thoughts on Contrastive Linguistics in the Context of Language Teaching', Monograph Series on Languages and Linguistics, pp. 185–94, No. 21. Georgetown, Washington, 1968.

through syntax is that idioms fall into place easily and naturally. As we all know, idiomatic usages, or formulas, or whatever we like to call expressions which resist being incorporated neatly into paradigms, are the step-children of the grammarian and methodologist, whatever his school. There are vast numbers of uses of prepositions and adverbial particles which cause very great difficulties to students of English as a foreign/second language —things like *in my way* and *on my way*; *look at your guns* and *look to your guns*. I can answer the question *May I come in?* with *Of course* or ×*By all means*, but not ×*Of mean* nor ×*By all courses*.

With articles too, we find many idiomatic expressions; for example, we *go to church* and *to town*, but *to the mosque, the city* and *the village*. We say *the Hague* and *the Piraeus*, but *Rotterdam* and *Salonica*. Similarly with other idiomatic expressions; we can say that something is *great fun*, or *great sport*, but not that it is ×*great amusement*, or ×*great merriness*, or ×*great enjoyment*. Such items would fall easily and naturally into place in a semantically graded course.

W. F. Mackey has said: 'The history of language teaching could be represented as a cyclic shift between language analysis and psychology, now one and now the other being emphasised. Language teaching will continue to be a child of fashion until it becomes an autonomous discipline which uses these sciences instead of being used by them. The problems of language teaching are central neither to psychology nor to linguistics. The solution is to elaborate the science of language didactics.'[1]

The main trouble with the language-teaching field today is that the university professor and the theoretical linguistician have far too much influence over it, partly because government departments and semi-official bodies use them as advisers, and tend to spend their funds in accordance with their advice.

The difficulty is that, while the work these professors and linguisticians are doing is admirable when seen from the viewpoint of other scholars, it is not necessarily and directly relevant to the needs of us language teachers. The linguistician must impress other linguisticians with the power, neatness, and economy of his linguistic model. Since the formal side of language is much easier to analyse into tidy, erudite, and impressive models than is the loose and amorphous field of meaning, situations, or whatever one wishes to call the stuff that language is all about, the linguisticians naturally keep carefully out of this graveyard

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of reputations. They do this partly because they claim that 'mean-
ing' is not subject to exact, scientifically measurable analysis,
and partly because they claim that it is, in fact, unnecessary
to do more than analyse the formal aspects of language. Even
linguisticians who are truly interested in language teaching often
seem to think that it is possible to learn a language by mastering
its formal aspects and then applying these to the real-life situations
with which any user of language as communication is faced:
as if one were to teach a prospective pilot all the *theory* of flying,
and then put him in charge of a commercial airliner full of
passengers to 'apply his knowledge'. Language-teaching materials
prepared by linguisticians often show this pathetic faith in the
student's ability to go from theory to practice unaided.

It is actually possible that a highly intelligent, highly motivated
adult student can learn a language very quickly in this way—
particularly if he is living in a country in which it is constantly
being spoken around him; but the really intelligent, highly
motivated, mature student is not our problem. He will learn
(and has learned throughout the centuries) regardless of the
methods he uses—and, for that matter, regardless of the teacher
he has.

What we are interested in in a democratic country is not the
brilliant exception, but the average mass, studying a foreign
language in classes of 40 or 50 or more, with the help of under-
paid, undertrained teachers, whose own command of the language
they are teaching probably leaves much to be desired.

For such students, the brilliant linguistic analyses of scholars
tend to be difficult to follow. Put an immediate consistent diagram,
a tree-diagram, a terminal string, a kernel formula or two, or a
generalised transformation before a 16-year-old student with an
IQ of 150+, sitting quietly in his study at home, and he will
probably derive as much pleasure and satisfaction from them
as from calculus, Einstein's special theory of relativity, or a
nice game of chess. But what about the 13-year-old with an IQ
of 98 or so, studying in a class of 40? Or the 11-year-old with
an IQ of 75?

I suggest that we need to start our researches from the class-
room and, as Mackey says, 'elaborate the science of language
didactics', rather than try to force every new theory evolved
for quite a different purpose (and, incidentally, doomed to be
thrown out and replaced by another after some 15 years or so)
into our service as language teachers.

The American and British Accents of English

J. WINDSOR LEWIS

Which accents?

A GENERATION AGO in 1937 Daniel Jones expressed the opinion that teachers of English as a foreign language using other types of pronunciation than RP 'should be encouraged to increase the number of textbooks illustrating those types'. In 1953 David Abercrombie expressed a similar wish and put forward the view that 'other accents—Scots, for instance— are undoubtedly easier for most foreigners'. In 1970 there is still little or no sign of the appearance of textbooks representing any accent of English other than either British Received Pronunciation or the accent called General American.

The term General American was introduced by George Philip Krapp about half a century ago. It was apparently originally based on what progress on the *Linguistic Atlas of the United States and Canada* has subsequently shown to be an optimistic view of the uniformity of American speech over the areas to which it refers. Nevertheless it remains a useful if loose means of reference to the varieties of speech employed by about two-thirds of Americans and Canadians. It excludes the U.S. eastern seaboard and what is traditionally called the South and also some of south-eastern Canada. It has been much used, often abbreviated to GA, by J. S. Kenyon and others.

No other American accent has greater prestige. It is significant that to audiences not entirely from their home localities some speakers from the east or the south may sometimes be disposed (especially in more formal speech) to adopt at least some speech features of their General American hearers. (The late President Kennedy is said to have done so. It is well known that President Johnson felt it some disadvantage that he had a southern accent.) This is quite unlikely to happen in reverse.

Something rather like ninety-five per cent of the population of England exhibit in their speech, fairly frequently, various elements which are evidence of the locality or region in which they passed their final linguistically formative years, i.e. their teens. The remaining small minority in whose speech no easily observable local characteristics are to be heard speak the variety of English most specifically known as Received Pronunciation (RP). This accent is often popularly referred to as BBC English; understandably, since most of the national newsreaders on

British radio and television (as also on the commercial networks) have been RP speakers. A person who uses this pronunciation is in England and Wales referred to as having 'no accent'. This, of course, is a matter of satisfaction to such persons because of its association with superior social status. If a new term were needed, it might well be called the Establishment accent. The expression Received Pronunciation and its abbreviation RP were first used in the last century by Alexander J. Ellis, the father of modern English phonetics. In 1926 Daniel Jones substituted this for his previous term Standard Pronunciation, to avoid any suggestion of a quality judgement or prescriptive intention on his part. Virtually all educated British people who speak 'with an accent' come under its influence to some extent, many making various degrees of conscious adaptation to it. Hardly anyone who moves away from his home region in Britain feels any social constraint to adapt to the accent of his new locality unless he identifies it with RP.

These then are the positions of the two accents of English which are taught outside the English-speaking countries: the prestige of each of them is unquestionable and each is the only accent in its sphere of influence to which speakers with other accents will ordinarily ever make concessions. They are thus the two great *common denominators* and the mere numbers of speakers who employ them is no necessary measure of the extent of their influence. This consideration is neglected by those who attempt to minimise the importance of RP by dwelling on the smallness of the minority who speak it in unmodified form. For the student of English as a foreign language who passes beyond the elementary stage it is interesting and important to have some knowledge of English accents other than the one he has attempted to acquire. Clearly the first of these, if he has acquired RP, will normally be General American: and vice versa. All teachers of advanced students should surely have at least some familiarity with the other great variety of spoken English.

The first thing to be clear about is that most people seem to have a quite exaggerated impression of the extent and importance of these differences. From the point of view of mutual intelligibility they are not important: they do not constitute a large proportion of the items and features of the language. Intelligent adults, although they are often fascinated by these differences (when they notice them, that is) experience no difficulty whatever in comprehending the other accent in ordinary everyday conversation.

We can divide these differences between RP and GA into three main categories: (i) phonetic, (ii) structural, (iii) distributional.

(i) *The phonetic differences*

The first category of differences can be fairly completely dealt with under a dozen headings:

1. Nasalisation. 2. Quality of /l/. 3. Quality of /t/. 4. Homophones before /r/ corresponding to RP /e, æ/ and /ɛə/. 5. Homophones before /r/ corresponding to RP /ɪ/ and /ɪə/. 6. Quality of /ɔ/. 7. Quality of /ʊ/. 8. Quality of /əʊ/. 9. Quality of /ɔɪ/. 10. Quality of /ʌ/. 11. Quality of final −*y*, etc. 12. Quality of unstressed /ɪ/. Only the first six of these are major differences. It is by no means certain that all of these items characterise the speech of a clear majority of GA speakers: opinions differ and statistics are lacking. Only a few of them are ever likely to give rise to misunderstandings: 3, 4, 5, 6, and possibly 12 (this last only in the remote likelihood of a confusion of such a rare pair as *quoted* and *quotaed*). The details of these phonetic-quality differences are as follows.

1. The well-known element of sound quality which runs through the speech of most Americans and is referred to as 'nasality' is only very inadequately and imprecisely indicated by that term. It is no doubt in some respects a different phenomenon from that which produces the contrast between oral and nasal vowels in French. It too is certainly associated with the mechanism which raises the soft palate, the valve which controls the use of the resonances provided by the nasal cavity. But it seems likely to be due largely to a particular setting of the supra-glottal cavities produced by the adjustment of the muscles (situated at the larynx) which operate this mechanism. It should not be thought that there is no nasalisation in RP, whether or not in the vicinity of nasal sounds proper. The average RP speaker uses a fair amount of nasal resonance, and some admired voice-quality types involve quite a large amount, but it is a type distinct from the American.

2. The second phonetic feature concerns the posture of the tongue in the articulation of *l* sounds. If the back of it is raised we get what is most commonly called a 'dark' *l*. This type seems to be used by most GA speakers everywhere, except before front vowels and the front semi-vowel /j/ (the first sound in *yes*), whereas in RP it is not used syllable-initially or between vowels. Thus words like *look, lot, village,* and *alone* most often have different, but *leaf, leg, land, volume,* similar *l* sounds in the two accents.

3. The values of /t/ for the two accents are different only when it occurs between vowels or after /n/ or /l/ and followed by a vowel (but not if it begins its syllable) or before syllabic /l/. Here

the force of utterance and aspiration which are the chief features which distinguish it from /d/ may be considerably reduced in both accents (in RP chiefly in more familiar styles of articulation) but much more widely in GA. In fact it is very common in GA for the contrast between, for instance, *writer* and *rider*, or *winter* and *winner*, to be absent altogether.

4. GA has usually only one sound, /e/, before /r/ in words which in RP may also have /ɛə/. Many GA speakers also have /e/ where RP has /æ/ in this position. The classic comparison is between *marry, merry,* and *Mary* which for these speakers are all the same /ˈmerɪ/.

5. GA has usually no contrast before /r/ corresponding to the two RP possibilities /ɪ/ and /ɪə/. Thus in GA the pairs of words *mirror* and *nearer* and *delirious* and *mysterious* are perfect rhymes. (Some GA speakers use /i/ where RP has /ɪə/.)

6. The absolute number of phonemes one sets up for GA or RP will depend on which analysis one chooses to adopt as most convenient for its intended applications, but however similarly one analyses them, one must come out with one phoneme less for GA than for RP. This is because words having in RP either /ɑ, ɒ/ or /ɔ/ (as in *calm, got,* and *law*) will in general (except for those words referred to under structural contrast 4 below) take GA /ɑ/ or /ɔ/. The most characteristic forms of RP /ɔ/ and GA /ɔ/ are notably different, the latter being much nearer to RP /ɒ/ than to RP /ɔ/ in posture of lips and tongue but without the usual relative shortness which contributes to the identity of RP /ɒ/. GA /ɔ/ is very variable in length, but at its shortest, e.g. beginning a polysyllabic word having its tonic stress two or three syllables later, it is often indistinguishable phonetically from RP /ɒ/. For instance, although paradoxically the first vowels in the GA and RP pronunciations of *Australia* or *cauliflower* would usually be phonetically identical [ɒ], in phonemic transcriptions (reflecting the values within the two total sets of oppositions) it is necessary to show the GA as /ɔ/ and the RP as /ɒ/.

7. The quality difference between characteristics GA and RP values of /ʊ/ as in *put* is much less striking. GA very often has rather less lip-rounding.

8. Very many GA speakers have more noticeable lip-rounding at the beginning of /ʊ/ as in *go* and also a less central initial tongue-position than in RP /əʊ/. The most characteristic current RP value of this phoneme has very little or no initial lip-rounding and an initial tongue-position front of central.

9. The quality of the initial element of the GA diphthong /ɔɪ/, as in *join*, is very often more markedly rounded and/or raised than that of RP /ɔɪ/.

10. Very many GA speakers use a quality nearly or exactly the same as their first vowel in *ago* for the vowel of *cup*, etc. The RP value of /ʌ/ is very much opener, approximately half-way from the *a* of *ago* to the vowel of *arm*, and more forward.

11. Large numbers of GA speakers use the vowel phoneme /i/, as in *see*, in various mainly word-final weakly-stressed syllables, most typically spelt with *−y*, such as the second syllable of *happy*. Such a usage distinguishes for example between *taxis* and *taxes*, in both of which the latter vowel is in RP always /ɪ/. This contrast is usually not so marked when no inflectional consonant follows the vowel.

12. In a large number of words whose unstressed final syllables contain the letter *i*, e.g. *notice, solid, typist, habit, active*, or certain other vowel spellings, e.g. *village, mountain, private, honest, ticket*, and plural and past-tense suffixes *−es, −ed*, and in various initial and medial syllables, RP has /ɪ/, whereas very many GA speakers employ a vowel which is much more central-ised (more like the first vowel of *ago*) than the corresponding RP sounds are. The name 'barred i' and corresponding symbol [ɨ] are often used for this sound. Many other GA speakers centralise these vowels completely to /ə/ (the first vowel of *ago*). (A small minority of RP speakers use a vowel centralised as much as the common GA value in these syllables.)

(ii) *The structural differences*

The dozen phonetic-quality differences we have described under (i) are, in the strictest definition of the word, the only 'accent' differences between the British and American forms of English with which we shall deal. Our remaining items, though popularly referred to as features of the American accent, are, in strictly linguistic terms, differences of 'dialect'.

These structural contrasts between GA and RP can also be grouped under a dozen headings. Seven of them are segmental (concerned with vowels and consonants) and five rhythmic (concerned with word-stress patterns) as follows. (These titles are intended as convenient labels rather than as scientific des-criptions.)

1. 'R-dropping.' 2. 'Yod-dropping.' 3. 'H-dropping.' 4. The 'broad A'. 5. The 'short O' before stops, etc. 6. The 'short O' before fricatives, etc. 7. The 'short U' before *r*-plus-a-vowel. 8. Pre-tonic stresses. 9. Immediately post-tonic stresses. 10. Later

post-tonic stresses. 11. The stressing of disyllabic verbs ending with *–ate*. 12. The stressing of 'exotic' words.

1. *'R-dropping.'* GA speakers pronounce all the *r*'s of English spelling: RP speakers do not use those represented in spelling as coming immediately before consonant-letters, or those occurring before a pause. GA does not introduce *r*-sounds not represented in the spelling. In certain situations, chiefly after [ə] ending a word and followed by a vowel, e.g. *idea of* /aɪˈdɪər əv/, most RP speakers do employ such *r*-sounds.

2. *'Yod-dropping.'* Whereas RP uses a 'yod' (the consonantal first sound in *yes*) in large numbers of words, e.g. *tube, student, stupid, opportunity, due, duke, during, produce, neutral, new, nuisance,* and *numerous,* most GA speakers have no yod in stressed syllables when this vowel /uː/ is preceded by one of these three consonants—all of which, it may be noted, involve a complete alveolar closure. (Many RP speakers 'keep' certain other yods chiefly after the other alveolar consonants /s, z, l/, e.g. in *suit, presume, solution.*) Examples of GA words without yod in in syllables with secondary stress include: *attitude, gratitude, substitute, residue, avenue, retinue.* In syllables immediately following primary or secondary stresses GA and RP treat these palatal yods alike, either keeping them in the original form or in converting them into the alveolar palatal consonants /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /ʃ/, or /ʒ/. This conversion is carried out more thoroughly in GA than RP, where the original and coalesced forms often persist side by side, e.g. for *educate, situation, issue.* Regularly coalesced examples include: *actual, architecture, congratulate, fortune, punctuality, virtue, procedure, pressure, measure, usual.* Compare also *annual, continuous, sinew, deluge, soluble, value, volume,* all with yod in GA and RP. The word *enthusiasm* (and its derivatives) normally has no yod in GA and quite often none in RP.

3. *'H-dropping.'* Many GA speakers use /hw/ instead of /w/ where the spelling has *wh*, as in *when*, etc. As for the non-use of orthographic *h* (other than in the sequence *wh*), GA and RP are in complete agreement, except for the distribution of certain minority forms. Although the majority forms of *human* and *humour* have /h/ in both GA and RP, the minority forms without it seem to be less unusual in GA. Very little heard in RP is the fairly common GA use of a weak-form of *have* with unreduced vowel, viz. /æv/. The GA *h*-less minority forms of *herb, humble,* and *Humphrey* do not exist in RP.

4. *The 'broad A'.* The value of the letter *a* before certain consonants, mainly clusters beginning with voiceless fricatives or /n/, is often /ɑː/ in RP but /æ/ in GA: e.g. *after, bath, pass, ask, plant,*

chance. Two out of three words in such contexts take only /æ/ in both varieties of English and most people find it highly ridiculous when /ɑ:/ is substituted for /æ/, so the student of English as a foreign language should use the latter if in the slightest doubt. A full list of the consonants and clusters and the seventy or so commonest words taking /ɑ:/ were given in my note on *The So-called 'Broad A'* in *E.L.T.* for October 1968, page 65. (It might well have included among the /ɑ:/ words *advance, plaster,* and *contrast*.)

5. *The 'short O' before stops, etc.* Most words like *top, stop, job, rob, not, spot, body, odd, box, knock, on, John, dollar, follow,* etc., where the letter *o* has its 'short' value and the following consonant is a stop, lateral, or non-velar nasal, take the unrounded vowel of *father* /ɑ/ in GA. All such words take /ɒ/ in RP, characteristically a slightly rounded vowel.

6. *The 'short O' before fricatives, etc.* In words like *off, often, office, cough, coffee, soft, cloth, cross, lost, long, moral, borrow, sorry, tomorrow,* and *quarrel,* a group including about a hundred common words, /ɔ/ as in *saw* is used in GA. (Cf. the similar origin of the 'broad A'.)

7. *The 'short U' before r-plus-a-vowel.* Only about twenty common words come under this heading: *borough, burrow, courage, concurrent, currant, currency, curry, flurry, furrow, hurricane, hurry, nourish, occurrence, recurrent, scurrilous, scurry, surreptitious, thorough, turret,* and *worry.* Various proper nouns exist, including *Curran, Durham, Murray,* and *Surrey.* In these GA has /ɜ/ and RP /ʌ/ for the short *u* or other vowel spelling. Even RP has /ɜ/ if the word-ending is an inflection, e.g. in *occurring.*

8. *Pre-tonic stresses.* Pre-tonic stresses (those before the principal stress) are almost identical in the two varieties of English, except that GA has weak and RP more usually the heavier stress provided by an unreduced vowel in the first syllable of the ending –isation. E.g. *civilisation* GA /ˈsɪvˌɪˈzeɪʃn/ RP /ˈsɪvɑɪˈzeɪʃn/. So also *characterisation, nationalisation, organisation, realisation, standardisation,* etc.

Note: By a 'weak' vowel is meant here one which involves very slight movement of the tongue from the position of rest: it is either central as /ə/, the first vowel of *ago,* or centralised, as /ɪ/ the vowel of *six.* Its occurrence in a syllable is a manifestation of reduced stress.

9. *Immediately post-tonic stresses.* Although the vast majority of GA and RP words show the same patterning, there are signs in a few fairly small groups of words of a greater GA tendency to unreduced vowels in syllables immediately following the tonic.

For example, a few of the scientific-type words ending in *–on* take /–ɑn/ quite regularly in GA (but usually /–ən/ in RP), viz. ˈneˌon, ˈnyˌlon, ˈpyˌlon, ˈpyˌthon, and to some extent ˈcarˌbon. There are various isolated words which show this tendency, including for example *accent* and *ancestor* (the first of which at least is often unreduced in RP) and several terminations, viz. *–berry*, *–body*, and *–penny*, and the place-name elements *–borough*, *–bury*, *–chester*, and *–shire*. Examples: ˈblackˌberry, ˈstrawˌberry; ˈnoˌbody, ˈsomeˌbody (these two are very common RP variants also); ˈsixˌpenny, ˈthreeˌpenny; ˈGainsˌborough, ˈScarˌborough, ˈBloomsˌbury, ˈTewkesˌbury; ˈRoˌchester, ˈWinˌchester; ˈBerkˌshire; ˈYorkˌshire. (An exception is GA New ˈHampshire.)

Oddly enough, the largest of these groups of words with GA/ RP post-tonic contrast reverses the usual preference. It is RP which favours the unreduced vowel in the termination *–ile* and GA which has the weak vowel or complete elimination of the vowel. There are over forty of these words, about half of them fairly common, including: *agile, docile, facile, fertile, futile, hostile, missile, puerile, reptile, servile, sterile, textile, virile.* (Exceptions in GA are *gentile* and *exile*, both have /–aɪl/.)

10. *Later post-tonic stresses.* GA shows a marked preference for unreduced vowels on the next syllable but one after the tonic. This tendency can be seen not only in isolated examples like ˈcircumˌstance, ˈconseˌquence (both commonly so also in RP when plural), ˈdiffiˌculty, ˈmelanˌcholy (also not unusual in RP), and ˈmiscelˌlany, but in important large groups such as the following:

With /–erɪ/, e.g.	*commentary, dictionary, February, honorary, imaginary, January, literary, military, ordinary, sanitary, secretary, temporary, voluntary, cemetery, confectionery, dysentery, millinery, monastery.* (RP /–(ə)rɪ/)
With /–ɔrɪ/, e.g.	*allegory, category, dormitory, oratory, purgatory, repertory, territory.* (RP /–(ə)rɪ/)
With /–məʊnɪ/, e.g.	*acrimony, alimony, ceremony, matrimony, testimony.* (RP /–mənɪ/)
With /–eɪtɪv/, e.g.	*administrative, appreciative, authoritative, communicative, cumulative, decorative, educative, generative, imaginative, imitative, operative, quantitative.* (RP /–ətɪv/)
With /–aɪl/, e.g.	*crocodile, domicile, reconcile, infantile, juvenile.* (Here RP and GA are in agreement.)
With /–bɜrəʊ/	*Attleboro(ugh), Edinburgh, Peterborough.* (RP /b(ə)rə/)
With /–berɪ/	*Canterbury, Shrewsbury, Tilbury.* (RP /b(ə)rɪ/)

With /–hæm/	*Birmingham, Cunningham, Nottingham.*
	(RP /əm/)
With /–ʃɪr/	*Devonshire, Lancashire, Worcestershire.*
	(RP /ʃə/)

It should be noted that GA and RP agree when the above suffixes (other than *–ile* and the place-name elements) occur with their initial vowels in the immediate post-tonic position: e.g. *factory, victory, harmony, colony, grocery, mystery, memory, representative, provocative, salary, summary*. Three words go counter to this in GA, viz: *contrary, library*, and *primary*, all of which usually take /–erɪ/. GA *colliery, hosiery*, and *penitentiary* (unlikely *aviary, incendiary, initiative, plagiary*, etc.) treat the pre-suffix *i* as consonantal and so do not take the unreduced vowel. Exceptions to the above rules also include *figurative, versatile, volatile*. *Auxiliary* and *tertiary* have both forms. RP has unreduced vowels in none of these words, except sometimes in *February, January, necessary*, and *secretary* and less familiar *–ative* words. The unreduced vowel accompanies an earlier tonic in GA than in RP in ˋ*ancillary*, ˋ*capillary*, ˋ*corollary*, ˋ*centenary*, ˋ*laboratory*, and ˋ*obligatory* (but *artillery* is as in RP). Rather less complete is the GA preference for unreduced vowel in the suffix *–on* in, for example, *Amazon, automaton, lexicon, marathon, pantechnicon, paragon, Parthenon, pentagon, phenomenon, Rubicon.*

11. *The stressing of disyllabic verbs ending with –ate.* These verbs are stressed on the root in GA but on the suffix in RP, unless they contain prefixes. The chief ones are: *castrate, cremate, dictate, donate, frustrate, gyrate, locate, migrate, narrate, placate, pulsate, rotate, stagnate, truncate, vacate, vibrate*. A couple of these have variant stressings in GA which coincide with the only RP form: *dictate* and *narrate*. A further two are only end-stressed: *create* and *equate*. If, however, a disyllabic verb ending with *–ate* contains a prefix it is usually end-stressed in both GA and RP. The chief of these are: *abate, collate, conflate, debate, deflate, dilate, elate, inflate, instate, relate, translate*. The last of these is often also fore-stressed in GA.

12. *The stressing of exotic words.* The stress patterns of a fairly large number of words perceived by speakers as adopted from French or some other foreign language (with two uncentralised vowels) tend to remain unsettled in both GA and RP. There is often a tug-of-war involving the tendency to naturalise (in part at least) by imposing first syllable stress. Some settle firmly into end-stress in both GA and RP, e.g. hoˋtel; others settle into fore-stress, e.g. ˋrestaurant, ˋdepot GA/ˋdipəʊ/ RP/ˋdepəʊ/. Often in GA these words are end-stressed. Only a minority of the scores of items involved have become settled firmly into end-stress in

GA: most are only either usually or frequently so. Firmly end-stressed are *barrage, chagrin, chateau, crochet, croquet, menage, mirage, plateau, toupée.* Usually or very often end-stressed are *attaché, ballet, beret, Bernard, blasé, cabaret, café, chalet, cliché, débris, fiancée, frontier, garage, liaison, massage, parquet, précis, premier, purée, régime, resumé, risqué, sauté, touché, trousseau vermouth, Voltaire.* All of these are most often front-stressed in RP. However, the usual preferences of GA and RP are sometimes reversed, e.g. in *trombone, magazine, moustache, bureau* (which is quite often end-stressed in RP, but apparently only fore-stressed in GA), and in certain place-names, e.g. *Beirut, Corfu,* and *Saigon.* Cf. also *cigarette,* which is often fore-stressed in GA but not in RP.

(Note: Numerical generalisations in all the above exclude personal and place names.)

(iii) Our third and last category of differences between GA and RP (the distributional or incidental contrasts) concerns unstructured items of vocabulary, etc., various chance preferences and random occurrences about which it is impossible to generalise.

The most remarkable fact that the examination of this area reveals is that, though we know well that there are very many odd words that do differ, the core of the language, the fundamental vocabulary, items such as those used to operate the grammatical structure, the numerals, words for universal everyday activities, parts of the body, etc., show extremely few contrasts. If we take the *General Service List of 2,000 English Words* (edited by Michael West) we find that *only half a dozen* of them show a major difference (that is a different vowel in the principal stressed syllable) not accounted for under the dozen headings we have listed above. Even most of these are in any case quite familiar to RP speakers as minority forms within RP. These are *adver`tisement* /aɪ/, *de`tail,* *(n)either* /iː/, *`inquiry,* *`progress* /ɒ/ and *year* /ɪə/. A further half dozen show minor differences (half of these also being RP minority variants). They are *figure* /ˈfɪgjʊər/, *nephew* /f/, *`non,sense, patriotic* /ˈpeɪ–/, *`some,body,* and *suggest* /səg–/. Even if we add a few derivatives of words appearing only in their base forms in the *List* (*ate* /eɪt/, *been* /bɪn/, *gone* /gɒn/, *shone* /ʃəʊn/—all but the last are again RP variants) the total is very small indeed.

The foregoing survey leaves out of account the field of prosody, with which, however, I hope to deal on another occasion.

A Note on 'Always'

BRIAN PEARCE

'THE CONTINUOUS FORM of a tense is sometimes used with the adverb "always", in order to express a repeated action', the foreign student is often told.

Well, now, when one says: 'He always sits in that chair', it is a repeated and not a continuous action that is meant. 'He' isn't there all the time! What does a teacher really mean when he says 'That student is always coming in late', as against 'That student always comes in late'? The latter sentence means that there is *never* an occasion when that student does not come in late, whereas the former means that he is *very often* late, though not necessarily on every possible occasion.

And there is something more to it as well. Whereas the latter sentence is a purely objective statement of fact, the former indicates an attitude towards the fact described—it is not merely equivalent to saying 'That student very often comes in late'. We use 'always' with the continuous form, in fact, when we speak of an action which occurs *frequently* and, moreover, *more frequently than we should like*. ('Really, you mustn't! You're always giving that child expensive presents!') The point is that, when used with the continuous form, 'always' must not always be taken literally. We have here an idiomatic use of the word, very common, and well-understood by natives, which it is especially important to explain to the foreign student, since if he does not understand it he may inadvertently give offence. If someone asks me 'Why do you always sit there?' I find nothing but a pardonable curiosity in his question. If, however, what he asks is 'Why are you always sitting there?' I have the right to discern behind it (provided that he is a native speaker of English) a critical, perhaps resentful, even hostile attitude towards my behaviour. (Compare the music-hall comedian's irritated demand as he kicks his stooping stooge: 'Why are you always doing up your bootlaces?')

This does not, however, exhaust the use of 'always' with the continuous form of a tense. It can also serve to make a sometimes important distinction. If I am asked 'Who is that man sitting by the gate?' and I answer 'I don't know his name, but he's always sitting there', I do not necessarily imply any attitude on my part towards the man's behaviour. Nevertheless, I use the continuous form because if I were to say 'He always sits there', this *could* be taken to mean that I have seen him actually take his seat, whereas this is not so, and I may wish to make that

clear. Contrast: 'He always comes up the lane at ten o'clock precisely, gets off his bicycle by the gate, and sits there, on that stone.'

Similarly, to say 'When I come by he is always standing at the door' implies that 'he' is in position already, on every occasion when I approach that place—perhaps it is just a coincidence—whereas 'When I come by he always stands at this door' presents his standing there as conduct that results from my approach so that, as I pass, I see him appear at the door.

Variations in Structural Drills

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ENGLISH IS THE LANGUAGE of instruction in Papua-New Guinea, so before students begin studies at the tertiary level they have had up to ten years of education in English. After five or six years of primary schooling, most students attend boarding schools, for the four years of secondary education, where they are expected to speak English all the time. Consequently they can express themselves with reasonable fluency and ease, if not accuracy, when they begin tertiary studies. English at this level must be designed to eliminate errors in expression as well as to reinforce and develop existing skills and to introduce new and more complex sentence-structures.

The errors in syntax made by the students (errors in tense usage, verb forms, agreement, use of articles, and prepositions) are not peculiar to Papua-New Guinea; nor is the fact that students have been drilling sentence patterns using these for some years. Although the students recognise the importance of English if they are to succeed in studies at this level, at a tertiary institute they expect something different from the structural drills at school. Once the novelty of using the language laboratory has worn off, one of the major considerations in writing scripts for taped structural drills is to introduce enough variety to prevent boredom, while providing the practice the students need. Experiments during the two-year courses in English have been designed at the Institute of Technology and suggest that language laboratory drills are most useful and effective if they last no longer than

fifteen minutes, arise from or are related to the material of the lectures, and are closely related to written work.

The language laboratory at the Institute of Technology is equipped with chairs on castors, tables in U-formation, and individual booths around the external perimeter of the room, so that movement from a class situation to individual aural work is quick and easy. Transfer of learning from the artificially contrived drill situation to one involving language in a social context is thus assisted. In this situation structural drills are valuable.

Four-phase drills are used, so that the students hear the cue, make a response, hear the correct response, and repeat it. After some practice of a controlled response, cues are given where several responses are possible, and these are practised in a class situation and reinforced in written work. Substitution drills of various kinds are certainly useful, but have limited variety even when used imaginatively. Some of the other variations of 'drill' tapes that have been used successfully are outlined below.

I. *Listening Piece*

A listening piece at the beginning of the tape has examples of the patterns being practised. This can be followed by questions to elicit responses using these patterns, e.g.: *We're going to spend tomorrow at the beach. We're going to leave early, so we're going to have an early night. As it may be difficult to get petrol we're going to fill the tank tonight. I'm going to drive the car down now. . . .*

Cue: *Why are you going to have an early night?*
Response: *We're going to have an early night because/Because we're going to leave early.*

If the passage is fairly long, students would have a copy of the listening piece, which could later be used for guided writing. A short passage could be heard two or three times and sentences drilled without a script.

II. *Dialogue*

A dialogue with examples of the patterns introduces each section. This can be related to or based on the material used for reading during the week, and practise the sentence structures used in written work. Students may have a copy of the dialogue after the model; then read and listen, then repeat each speech B's part; then read A's part. This practises the pattern being drilled, pronunciation, stress, intonation and rhythm, as well as being a model of ordinary conversation, e.g.:

(1) A: *Why are you packing the car tonight?*
    B: *We're going to drive to Goroka for the Easter holidays. What are you going to do?*

A: *We were going to fly to Rabaul, but I think John's going to be working.*

B: *That's going to be dull for the children, isn't it?*

A: *Oh, we're going to take them out in the boat for some of the time.*

(2) This dialogue is practising patterns of disagreement, and is based on the reading assignment for the week, which was 'Chemical and Biological Warfare'.

A: *I think it's wrong of scientists to use their knowledge of germs and chemicals to kill other people. There are conventional ways of waging war, and conventional weapons are preferable.*

B: *I'm afraid I don't agree with you. War in itself is bad; but I don't think germ warfare is any worse than any other kind.*

A: *But germ warfare kills civilians as well as those actively engaged in battle. With conventional weapons non-combatants don't get hurt.*

B: *As a matter of fact, I disagree. Bombing, especially with nuclear weapons, often kills more civilians than combatants.*

III. *Visual Cues*

(a) Students have a time-line with the hour at which an action is being performed or the year an event has taken place. The action may be drawn rather than described. This can be used to practise such things as tenses, continuity of action, or time phrases, using hours (7, 10 to 7, etc.) or *first thing this morning, at noon, in the evening, immediately after*, etc.,

e.g.

6.00 am	6.30 am	6.45 am	6.50 am	7.00 am
John is asleep	Alarm rings	John gets up	John has a shower	John has breakfast

Cue: *It's 7 o'clock. Is John having a shower?*
Response: *He's already had a shower. He's having breakfast.*

(b) Students have a copy of parts of sentence, listen to the example and cue, and respond in the pattern. This example is based on the reading assignment, which was 'A Tourist's Visit to India'.

Students' script:

1 .... *they are very friendly.*

2 .... *they may be sick or unemployed.*

Cue: *I think the vendors in Indian bazaars are too inquisitive about their customers.*

Response: *Perhaps. On the other hand they are very friendly.*
Cue: *I think beggars are too lazy to work for a living.*

Response: *Perhaps. On the other hand they may be sick or unemployed.*

IV. *Conversational Cueing*

(a) Students need a pattern or example, and a list of written cues, yes or no. This particularly useful for tense usage, e.g.

Cue: *Must we paint the door?*

Response: *No, it's already been painted.*

Cue: *We must paint the door, mustn't we?*

Response: *Yes, it hasn't been painted yet.*

(b) Progressive cueing is effective for practising various forms of the conditional, e.g.

Cue: *The tea isn't sweet, so she doesn't like it.*

Response: *If the tea were sweet, so she would like it.*

Cue: *It wasn't raining, so he didn't take an umbrella.*

Response: *If it had been raining he would have taken an umbrella.*

V. *Oral Composition*

(a) The students have a list of sentences numbered A, B, C, etc. They hear cues such as *A but B, although A, B,* etc., e.g.

Students' script:

A. *I had forgotten my umbrella.*

B. *I still walked across to the theatre.*

Cue: *A but B.*

Response: *I had forgotten my umbrella, but I still walked across to the theatre.*

Cue: *Although A, B.*

Response: *Although I had forgotten my umbrella, I still walked across to the theatre.*

(b) The students have a list of sentences which they join in a suitable way to make one complex sentence. There may be variations in the methods used to join the sentences, e.g.

Students' script:

1. *Many are simply poor.*
2. *Many are unemployed.*
3. *Many are seeking a little extra income.*

Basic sentence:

Some Indian beggars are religious mendicants.

Cue: *Number one.*

Response: *Some Indian beggars are religious mendicants, but many are simply poor.*

Cue: *Number two.*

Response: *Some Indian beggars are religious mendicants, but many are simply poor or unemployed.*

Cue: *Number three.*

Response: *Some Indian beggars are religious mendicants, but many are simply poor, unemployed, or seeking a little extra income.*

After being practised orally, these exercises can be written with variations in style, and later written entirely from memory. This type of exercise bridges closely guided and free writing.

Dictation as a Device for Testing Foreign-Language Proficiency[1]

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THE PRESENT PAPER reports data supporting the use of dictation as a technique for testing foreign-language proficiency. The data to be reported were gathered as part of an ongoing evaluation and revision of the English as a Second Language Placement Examination (ESLPE) for the University of California at Los Angeles.

The current form of the examination, which has been in use for the last ten years, consists of five parts. Each part is intended to test a skill or skills essential to the use of the English language by foreign students in the successful performance of required academic tasks. The five parts of the test consist of a section on vocabulary, a composition, a phonological discrimination task, the selection of grammatically acceptable sentences (with multiple-choice items), and a dictation. In order to attempt to determine the amount of overlap between skills measured by each part of the test, scores of 100 students selected at random from the 350 who took the ESLPE in the fall of 1968 were analysed by a multiple correlation technique.[2] Each part of the test was correlated with each other part and with the total score, which was used as the dependent variable. It was discovered that the dictation correlated more highly with each other part of the test than did any other part. In other words, when the correlations between

each section and each other section were rank-ordered, the dictation came out first in every possible category. The dictation was insignificantly lower than the composition as a predictor of the total score. (The results of the analysis are given in the table below.)

TABLE I

	Total	Vocab.	Grammar	Compos.	Phonology	Dictation
Total	1·00	0·77	0·78	0·88	0·69	0·86
Vocabulary	0·77	1·00	0·58	0·51	0·45	0·67
Grammar	0·78	0·58	1·00	0·55	0·50	0·64
Composition	0·88	0·51	0·55	1·00	0·53	0·69
Phonology	0·69	0·45	0·50	0·53	1·00	0·57
Dictation	0·86	0·67	0·64	0·69	0·57	1·00

The correlations between the dictation and other parts of the examination were significant at the ·001 level of confidence. (Roughly speaking, this means that any one of the correlations of the observed magnitudes could be expected to occur by accident less than one time in a thousand observations.) In short, the dictation clearly seems to be the best single measure of the totality of English-language skills being tested.[1]

These results would clearly seem to refute the conclusions of certain authorities who have argued that dictation as a testing device is quite inferior to other techniques. For example, Robert Lado has stated:

> Dictation . . . on critical inspection . . . appears to measure very little of language. Since the word order is given . . . it does not test word order. Since the words are given . . . , it does not test vocabulary. It hardly tests the aural perception of the examiner's pronunciation, because the words can in many cases be identified by context . . . The student is less likely to hear the sounds incorrectly in the slow reading of the words which is necessary for dictation (1961: 34).

[1]Rebecca Valette (1967) reports that she also found a high correlation (.90) between scores on a dictation and combined listening, reading, and writing scores on a German examination. On the basis of another study, Valette (1964) has reported: 'For students possessing minimal experience with dictée, the dictée can validly be substituted for the traditional final examination in first semester French' (p. 434). Others who have argued in favour of the use of dictation as a testing and/or teaching device are Fe Dacanay (1963), Mary Finocchiaro (1958), and J. Sawyer and Shirley Silver (1961).

David Harris has remarked:

> As a testing device ... dictation must
> be regarded as generally both
> uneconomical and imprecise (1969: 5).

D. F. Anderson says:

> Some teachers argue that dictation is a
> test of auditory comprehension, but surely
> this is a very indirect and inadequate
> test of such an important skill (1953: 43).

W. R. P. Somaratne states:

> Dictation is primarily a test of
> spelling (1957: 48).

Certainly, the data presented above tend to refute these statements. Even in the absence of such data, however, there is a great deal to be said from a theoretical point of view in support of dictation as a testing technique. For example, Lado's statement that in dictation 'the word-order is given by the examiner' is credible only from the vantage point of the speaker (examiner)—since he knows the words and word-order. For the listener (the student in this case), as Saussure observed many years ago:

> ... the main characteristic of the
> sound chain is that it is linear.
> Considered by itself it is only a
> line, a continuous ribbon along
> which the ear perceives no self-
> sufficient and clear-cut division, ...
> (1959: 103–4).

In order to segment the chain an active process of analysis is necessary. This analysis is no simple matter, as anyone who has attempted to accomplish speech perception by machine will attest.[1]

While the words and word-order may be 'given' from the viewpoint of the speaker (who knows what message he has encoded), they are not in the same sense 'given' from the vantage-point of the listener. He must discover them. A cursory look at errors common in dictations reveals order-inversions: e.g. 'as change to continue' for 'as change continues to'; 'some by an even' for 'by something even'; 'barely have a chance' for 'has barely a chance'.[2] Moreover, words and phrases are often under-

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[1]For some discussion of the complexity of the speech recognition process and the mechanical simulation of it, see W. B. Newcomb (1967).

[2]These examples were taken from three students' renderings of the dictation given in September, 1969, as part of UCLA's ESLPE. A comprehensive error analysis for that examination is now in progress.

stood incorrectly: e.g. 'scientists examinations' and 'scientists imaginations' which are foreign student renderings of 'scientists from many nations'. Also, extra words may be inserted: 'for at least five hundred thousand years' instead of 'for at least five thousand years'; 'of our life' for 'of life'; 'of the time' for 'of time'; 'they are never made' for 'they never made'.[1] These examples, which could be multiplied indefinitely, clearly illustrate the fact that neither words nor word-orders are supplied to the student in a clear and unambiguous form. Rather, the student is given a sequence of sounds from which an intended set of words in sequence must be extracted.

Even in briefly glancing at the errors students make in taking dictation, it becomes quite clear that the student does not merely hear words in a particular order and write them down. Rather, he hears sound-sequences, bounded occasionally by silences or pauses, but which are otherwise strung together without obvious boundaries between them: he actively segments these sequences into words, phrases, and sentences, that make sense to him. Clearly, common errors suggest a dynamic process of analysis-by-synthesis.[2] The student not only receives auditory information, but he processes this information in order to generate a sentence (or sequence of them) that has meaning. This is by no means the simple activity that Lado's statement implies. It is in fact one of the most complex processes known to man—a process which to date is not fully understood. In fact, all attempts to simulate it have failed in important respects.[3]

Harris's statement that dictation is 'uneconomical' and 'imprecise' may have more in its favour. However, the economy of administering a test is largely to be determined in terms of the amount of information that the test ultimately provides. The fact that dictation tests a broad range of integrative skills may outweigh the difficulties involved in administration and correction. Moreover, the effectiveness of dictation as a diagnostic device may even be superior to tests involving multiple choice, short answers, fill-in blanks, etc., which are sometimes thought to be more accurate. The reason for this is that a dictation is apt to provide a more comprehensive sampling of the integrative skills involved in the understanding of complex English structures than the more isolative and analytical objective tests.

Anderson's statement that dictation is an inadequate test of auditory comprehension is contradicted by our data, and seems to have no substantial arguments in its favour. Somaratne's

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[1] See note [2], previous page.
[2] Such models of human information processing are not at all uncommon. See Miller, Galanter, and Pribram (1960) and their references.
[3] See Chomsky's discussion of this process in his *Language and Mind*, 1968.
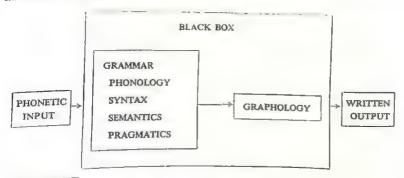
interpretation of dictation as a 'test of spelling' seems to indicate a serious lack of understanding of the process of speech perception. While dictation does measure control of a language's graphological system, this is certainly not all it reveals.

Perhaps there is a still more basic error in arguments against dictation as a testing device. Lado's statement, quoted above, seems to imply that the more analytical objective tests are superior to tests which require the integrative use of language competence. This is probably a reflection of the still current tendency of many linguists to treat the elements of language analytically. Bloomfieldian linguists attempted to treat linguistic utterances as purely objective phenomena apart from the settings in which they occurred. They attempted to deal with language (as much as possible) without dealing with meaning. The now prominent school of Chomskyan transformationalists also employs an analytical technique which treats language as a self-contained system apart from its use in communication. Both of these procedures have been seriously challenged recently,[1] and it would seem that the arguments employed against them are to a certain extent applicable here. If it is indeed true that language cannot be successfully explained apart from its use as a medium of communication,[2] it would follow that analytical tests of language competence which remove linguistic units from the meaningful contexts in which they occur are apt to be less valid than integrative tests which are more relevant to communication skills. Certainly dictation, which requires the perception of meaningful speech, falls into the latter category.

The processes involved in taking a dictation may be represented as shown below.

BLACK BOX

GRAMMAR
PHONOLOGY
SYNTAX
SEMANTICS
PRAGMATICS

PHONETIC INPUT → [GRAMMAR PHONOLOGY SYNTAX SEMANTICS PRAGMATICS] → GRAPHOLOGY → WRITTEN OUTPUT

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[1] See Oller and Sales (1969) and their references.

[2] Incidentally, this argument finds an interesting application in theories of language teaching. Clifford Prator (1965) has given an excellent statement of the need for treating language as a medium of communication in teaching. Oller (1969) discusses experimental evidence supporting the need for presenting a foreign language through meaningful communicative activity (see also references listed there).

While the interactions between phonology, lexicon, grammar and graphology are bound to be very complex, at least as many systems as those suggested in the schematic are required for writing a dictation. The student is tested for his ability to (a) discriminate phonological units, (b) make decisions concerning word boundaries in order to discover sequences of words and phrases that make sense, i.e. that are grammatical and meaningful, and (c) translate this analysis into a graphemic representation.

In conclusion, though a good deal more experimentation needs to be done in the area of evaluating foreign-language testing techniques, it seems safe to conclude that dictation is a useful device for measuring foreign-language proficiency. It has not been the intent of this paper, however, merely to support the use of dictation, but also to encourage an experimental attitude toward problems related to foreign-language testing in general. While the statements of experts may be essential in the beginning stages of a science, for a field of study to progress, there must be an increasing reliance on tested hypotheses, and a decreasing dependence on the pronouncements of authorities.

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Oral Expression Tests: 2

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EVALUATION OF ORAL EXPRESSION initially involves motivation and reality. The test situation must be motivating and real for the subject, so that he speaks freely and so that his production is representative of his general capacity to speak in most situations. It does not matter whether written, spoken, or graphic means are used to stimulate the subject, as long as the means selected provide something motivating to talk about. Pictures are often objected to on the grounds that their socio-cultural content may prove a barrier to understanding. Such an objection is based on the erroneous assumption that language exists independently of the community which speaks it. In fact, language is the expression of that community's way of life; and the teacher is obliged to teach both language and culture at the same time. Whether to teach British or American English is more than a question of which accent, but (and this is much more important) of which way of life. The difference between the two cultures is well illustrated by these two sentences: 'Can I buy you a drink?' and 'Would you like a drink?'. Teaching English to Amerindians is teaching them either the culture of the white man or an alternative language to use on the reservation. Be that as it may, in an oral expression test the subject is not being evaluated on his understanding of the pictures. The very fact that he may not understand may provide the necessary motivation and matter for conversation.

Motivation is directly related to the reality of the test situation. This reality has two aspects: the extent to which the test situation is real for the subject; and the extent to which the language generated in the test situation is representative of language generated in other situations. Certain situations are unsuitable for the test, as little active use of the language is required to function efficiently in them: to have the subject buy an airline ticket or order food in a restaurant would not encourage him to speak a great deal, since what is required is minimal oral and reading comprehension, a few gestures and a few words.

The test should be divided into two sections: interview, and then discussion. The interview section, besides the obvious goal of putting the subject at his ease, is made up of personal questions which run through the whole gamut of *what, when, where, who, why, how, be, can, do, have, will,* and *would* interrogations, which

appear in most oral expression situations and are basic to the simplest conversation. A subject who has difficulty in answering such fundamental questions as 'What is your name?', 'How old are you?', and 'How long have you been living in Québec?' cannot be expected to communicate effectively and easily in the most elementary situations. The next section, discussion, goes beyond simple question and answer to establish to what extent the subject can talk about something that interests him. For an eight-year-old it would be a question of seeing whether he could tell a simple story; for a foreign applicant to an English-speaking university, whether he could discuss student participation. Such discussion, especially when time is limited and only a small number of interviewers are available, can be equally and even more effectively carried out at the level of the group. However, direction of a group, in the appropriate informal atmosphere, ensuring equal participation by subjects of different competence in language, poses special problems. Both sections, interview and discussion, are necessary, as oral expression, whether at a party or at a seminar, involves both question/answer and narration. Many students never get beyond the question/answer stage and are incapable of giving the simplest account of something that has happened to them.

At the conclusion of the test, the interviewer's subjective impressions of the subject's performance should not be neglected, simply because they are intuitive and are not expressed in scientific language. Similarly, the opinions of teachers and others, after having listened to a certain number of recorded interviews, should not be ignored. The subsequent analysis of the subject's oral production will provide the necessary concrete evidence, expressed in an appropriate, orderly, systematic, and scientific manner, to back up, modify, or reject the interviewer's impressionistic judgement.

There are no widely accepted linguistic criteria of grammatical, lexical, and phonetic correction, but there are two eminently practical criteria which should underlie any evaluation, namely, comprehensibility and acceptability. Does the subject's error or deviation from the implicit and explicit norms of speech of a community make him difficult to understand, and if not, is that error or deviation acceptable to that community?

The absence of widely accepted linguistic criteria for the evaluation of oral expression does not mean that it is impossible, after enough samples of oral production have been taken, to set up criteria which can be easily translated into mechanical, formal, and rapid identification, description, and classification of what the subject says. The following grammatical, lexical, and phonetic items, taken from actual tests given at Laval as

part of the English-as-a-second-language programme, will illustrate some of the evaluation problems:

Evaluation of errors

Grammatical and lexical errors:

1. He takes   breakfast at nine o'clock.
2. He takes the   breakfast at nine o'clock.
3. He take   breakfast at nine o'clock.
4. He is taking the breakfast at nine o'clock.
5. He taking the   breakfast at nine o'clock.
6. He participates to all their games.

Phonetic errors:

Individual sounds

1. Bought is equivalent to bout.
2. Here's   „   he's.
3. Veal   „   bill.
4. Work   „   walk.

Stress and intonation

1. He's coming.
   Rising tone, instead of falling tone, on the word 'coming' changes the statement into a question.
2. I don't like him.
   Shift of primary stress from 'like' to 'him' involves two basic implicit meanings:
   (i) but I like her.
   (ii) I hate him.

Evaluation of structures

Grammatical, lexical and phonetic structures:

1. It's Bill.
2. He's here.
3. He's tired.
4. He's in the garden.
5. He's coming.
6. He can come.
7. He's coming tomorrow at five o'clock.
8. He can come tomorrow at five o'clock.
9. He says (that) he can come tomorrow at five o'clock.
10. Although he's tired, he can come tomorrow at five o'clock.
11. He's too tired to come tomorrow at five o'clock.

Identification, description, classification, and interpretation of such data are no more complex than writing a non-participating test and evaluating the results. The above data seem to pose immense problems of assessment, but what is involved is not a detailed phonetic analysis, worthy of a phonetician, but a rapid approximate survey. It is not difficult for a group of teachers and company personnel, after having listened to a tape, to arrive at an accurate assessment of the subject's stress, intonation, and rhythm patterns, e.g. he puts the stress with a rising intonation on the last syllable of every third to fifth word, giving equal value

to each syllable, pausing after every third to fifth word for three to five seconds, averaging some 90 words a minute. The general impression of the subject's performance in English is that he is difficult to understand, as he speaks slowly and pauses too often and too long, and as his speech pattern is too centred on his mother tongue.

Such assessment is not in fact excessively complex, and the most significant feature of it is that it is carried out on language produced by the subject and that his oral production can be directly compared with that of a mother-tongue speaker. In a bilingual country where two languages enjoy official status and are both used as official languages in the various government agencies, the oral second-language competence of civil servants can be evaluated in terms of the mother-tongue speaker in specific job situations. Within the school system, the teacher and the programme director have a most effective way of assessing how successful the programme has been in teaching the spoken language and of comparing the student with a mother-tongue speaker of the same age and similar background.

Whereas the assessment of the subject's oral production within the terms of the programme or in terms of the mother-tongue speaker is based on criteria that change as the programme changes, and which vary according to the type of mother-tongue speaker chosen as a model, the analysis of the oral production should be standardised. Such standardisation permits the drawing up of a permanent record-card of the student, which any director or teacher, in any region, could interpret in terms of the arbitrary norms of his own programme. The record should be set out as follows:

- duration of test
- number of words produced by the subject
- number of sentences
- type of sentences
- type of grammatical structures
- type of lexical structures
- type of phonetic structures
- type of grammatical errors
- type of lexical errors
- type of phonetic errors

While in practice, and for a long time to come, such standardised analysis will vary considerably from region to region, the tape recordings accompanying the students' record-card will provide teachers with all the necessary information.

It will again be objected that such an analysis, standardised under the above headings, poses immense problems, as linguists are enormously divided on what language is, on its function,

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and on how to describe and classify it. Such problems are no greater than those that must be faced in writing a non-participating test for a particular group, the results of which are as difficult to interpret as those of a participating test. Whatever the theories of linguists may be, for the teacher and the test-designer language is a system, a system of systems, a dependent and independent structure, an individual act and a social phenomenon, an act of communication, a written and spoken code. What the teacher and the test-designer require is a practical system of analysis, which corresponds to the reality of speech and writing.

The oral expression test used by *CRÉDIF* in *Voix et Images de France* as a classification and overall progress test, despite its limitations, indicates how possible it is to arrive at a quick and accurate analysis of oral production. It is limited in its analysis; five minutes is too short a period of time to provide enough oral expression on which to base an analysis; there is no dialogue, only narration; the narration is confined to describing the action in a series of pictures centred on Parisian family life, the social class being somewhere between lower and middle bourgeoisie; the analysis of structure and errors is too complicated and too imprecise; the scoring of the errors, the coefficient of correction and expression, the interpretation of statistics obtained are only meaningful in terms of the experimental classes at *CRÉDIF*; and no account is taken of the number of words produced by the subject, only the number of sentences.

Too much money and too much research has been concentrated on the non-participating (objective) test. Research should be concerned with analysing and assessing actual language-production, namely, speaking and writing, and with the most effective test situation to encourage such production. As has already been pointed out, the non-participating test evaluates the subject's passive knowledge of the language, knowledge of the language's system for the purpose of comprehension. It gives no reliable indication of his active knowledge, of how much that knowledge is geared for expression, for the purpose of communication. Is a university admission battery of non-participating tests in grammar, vocabulary, and reading a real indication of the foreign student's capacity to use his English?

It is often claimed that there is a high correlation between the performance of foreign students in these admission tests and their subsequent performance in their degree programme. However, success in their studies is not simply and necessarily a consequence of their second language competence in English, but the result of a whole series of variables, such as dedication and ability in their chosen discipline. Those who passed the test and who

made a poor showing in their university courses must not be forgotten. Of course, the percentage of failures is small, but was their lack of success due to the test's failure to measure their second-language competence or was it the result of other factors, such as involvement in extra-curricular activities or lack of ability in their chosen discipline? Even assuming for the sake of argument that those who passed the test did well in their courses uniquely because of the language factor, it was not that the test predicted their language competence, but simply because, at that time of test, they were already proficient in speaking and writing. At its best, the battery of non-participating tests only indicates listening and reading fluency. Listening and reading fluency are little indication of speaking and writing fluency. University education is more than the capacity to understand the written or spoken word; it is the capacity to communicate, to discuss in speech or in writing what has been heard or read. It is this capacity to communicate that university admission-tests in English for foreign students should be more concerned with.

The non-participating test's margin of error in rejecting those foreign students who do have the necessary second-language competence in English should not be ignored simply because the percentage involved is small. It is important to face the injustice done to the twenty per cent who do not pass the test but who do have the language competence required, and the hardship inflicted on the twenty per cent who pass the test but who do not have the required language-competence.

The score which decides admission or rejection is difficult to determine and difficult to justify. Why should eighty per cent rather than seventy per cent be the pass mark? If a student falls short of the pass mark by two, how important is that difference of two and what does it mean? Familiarity with non-participating tests can be the deciding factor for borderline students.

The administrative convenience of non-participating tests conceals their limitations. The importance of these limitations should by far outweigh the time and expense of participating tests, as these tests do measure what the subject can do with the language and how much his knowledge of the language has been and is organised for purposes of communication. Non-participating tests are often misunderstood and are often misused to the extent, sometimes, that the course is designed for the tests rather than the tests for the course. In practice this may result in the teacher only teaching what can be measured by the non-participating tests. Thus a course in the spoken language may never get beyond listening fluency, the student's use of the language being limited to pattern drills. The knowledge the student acquires of the language is passive, organised for the purposes of oral

comprehension, as he has little opportunity to organise what he learns for the purpose of communication in the real act of dialogue, trying to communicate an idea to another person.

In bilingual countries important decisions in government and business can be held up because senior executives' second-language competence in oral comprehension is not matched by an equivalent second-language competence in oral expression.

Whether the second- or foreign-language programme is taught to people at school or at university, to government or company employees, the student in the classroom has to have practice in communication. The most effective way, if not the only way, for the teacher, the programme director, and other people to see how much a student has got out of his oral language-programme is to place him in a situation where he has to talk to someone, to communicate, to exchange ideas in conversation. The role of the oral expression test is to do just that: create a situation in which the student participates freely and at his best.

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Few/a few — Little/a little

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Introduction

I have consulted several grammar books and other sources[1] in an attempt to clarify for myself the difference between *few* and *a few*, and *little* and *a little*. All of these sources treat the difference mainly (or wholly) in terms of meaning (even denotative meaning). Schibsbye, for example, writes: '*Few* and *little* signify *hardly any*(*thing*), but *some*(*thing*) when the indefinite article is attached.'

Such explanations suggest that there is something inherent in the context of situation which could lead to the use of the one rather than the other. But it seems to me that the same physical situation could provide an appropriate framework both for Schibsbye's first example: *Few people study Latin today*, and also for: *A few people study Latin today*. Most people would agree that the choice is motivated by the linguistic context and/or the attitude of the speaker more than by any aspect of the situation under discussion. In other words, the actual numbers (or amount) involved is only one of the factors to be taken into consideration.

In what follows, I shall look at the syntactic/semantic consequences of the selection of each item from each pair.

The sentences:

F1a Despite the very good weather, few people had come.
F1b Despite the very bad weather, a few people had come.
F2a Everyone can learn to swim, but few have done so.
F2b Everyone can learn to swim, and a few have done so.
F3a Few organisations have done anything worth while.
F3b A few organisations have done something worth while.

L1a Despite the favourable circumstances, little has turned out well.
L1b Despite the unfavourable circumstances, a little has turned out well.
L2a There has been time for progress, but little has been achieved.
L2b There has been time for progress, and a little has been achieved.
L3a Little of what is available is of any value.
L3b A little of what is available is of some value.

My impression is that it is impossible (or, at least, highly improbable) that in any of the above sentences one could make the opposite choice from the relevant pair of items.

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[1] See the list at the end of this article.

Discussion

In the pairs of sentences F1 and L1 the contrastive *despite* shows the following oppositions:

F1a good	: few
L1a favourable	: little
F1b bad	: a few
L1b unfavourable	: little

In other words, *few* and *little* must be assumed to have negative emotive meaning, whereas *a few* and *a little* have positive emotive meaning.

In the pairs of sentences F2 and L2, since the only change necessary is the conjunction, we are further away from semantic considerations and closer to syntactic ones.

In the pairs of sentences F3 and L3 we get back to *some* and *any*, but not here used in a vague semantic definition. Here we see the mutual syntagmatic restrictions between these words (and their compounds) and the items of the pairs under consideration. *Emotionally positive* some *clearly collocates with* a few *and* a little *whereas the emotionally negative (or neutral)* any *collocates with* few *and* little.

(It is also worth noticing about *a few* that it appears with unit words in expressions of the type: *a few pounds of potatoes, a few acres of land, a few feet of wire*. There are no corresponding expressions with *few* in them.)

Teaching the items

In teaching, for example, the simple present, we regard *Mary usually walks to school* as a better example for introduction and practice than *Mary walks to school*. The use of appropriate time adverbials is thought to help the learners in understanding and learning to use the tense (aspect) in question. Here the meaning involved is of the referential type, i.e. a change in the external situation and/or the speaker's temporal relation to it would require a corresponding change in the verb + adverbial.

As I have tried to show in this article, the choice between the pairs of items under discussion is not (solely) determined by the external situation, but (more) by the speaker's attitude. But it seems to me that it would be just as useful, as in the case of the simple present, to present learners with sentences where the items to be learned were seen or heard to collocate with certain other items, which have presumably already been taught.

With regard both to presentation and practice, I am a great believer in using language which is not only grammatically acceptable but also real and meaningful for the learners in their own particular situation. For presentation, I suggest that the

individual teacher should make up examples suitable to the local situation. I have been unable, however, to find sufficient examples for a practice which would satisfy this demand. I hope that practices of the following types may be helpful through the association of each item with the appropriate (positive or negative) feelings in the rest of the sentence. My suggestion is that the learners should make up sentences on the basis of the following schemata:

1.   the very good weather,
            the favourable circumstances,
    Despite the positive response,   few people
            the offers of help,
            the generous attitudes,
            the pleasant atmosphere,

                        grasped the opportunity.
                        took advantage of it/them.
                        came to our support.

2.   the terrible weather,
            the unfavourable circumstances,
            the negative response,
    Despite the lack of support,
            the unhelpful attitudes,
            the unpleasant atmosphere,

                        managed to make some progress.
            a few people still believed in ultimate success.
                        succeeded in keeping their tempers.

3.   interest,
                        time,
                        money,
        There has been plenty of opportunity,
                        scope,

                but little has been achieved.
                        of value has resulted.
                        of importance has come of it.

4.   money available,
                        time for progress,
                        scope for improvement,
        There has been some interest from the public,
                        opportunity for self-education,

                        has turned out successfully.
                and a little has been achieved.
                        is perfectly satisfactory.

Apart from presentation and practice, the sentence frames which I have considered will be found very useful in diagnostic tests for control of these items.

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English for Asian Learners: Are we on the right road?

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MORE AND MORE often I have periods of doubt about the way many of us teach English, and about why we teach in this way.

Communication efficiency

Communication theory tells us that when a native speaker of English speaks or writes, about 50 per cent of the sounds he makes or of the signs he uses, and a large number of the grammatical features, are redundant.

Now a learner's first impression of redundancy and efficiency in a foreign language is formed from his previous experience of language, that is, from his mother tongue. To a German-speaking learner, for instance, English is so free from the unproductive noun and verb endings of his mother tongue that its grammar seems generally efficient. An Asian learner has a different standard, as we discover from his typical 'mistakes': omission of *is, are* etc., omission of articles, omission of the *-s* inflection of nouns and verbs, use of *he* for *he* and *she*, non-use of question word order, uncertainty over tenses, a wide use of *isn't it?* Such a list of 'mistakes' is, in fact, at the same time a list of generally redundant features in the grammar of English.

It is usual to speak of 'mother-tongue pull' to explain such mistakes, but mother tongues pull only where they *can* pull. Where the foreign language is *more* efficient than a mother tongue, the pull of the mother tongue either cannot or does not produce persistent 'mistakes'.

What we are up against, then, is the fact that Asian children accept the non-redundant features of the English given to them, and with these features make a language of communication which is more efficient than standard English. To put it bluntly, for each of the 'mistakes' listed above it is the 'mistake' that is psychologically correct.

Learning a language and learning to think

Most people would agree that language learning should lead to the development of concepts, and to an awareness of the relationships among them; and, of course, to an ability to express the concepts and relationships. In this respect, both what the children learn and the way they learn what they do learn are important.

J. A. Fodor writes[1] that the problems of a child learning his mother tongue are very like those of scientific induction. The utterances he hears are the 'data', which he 'processes'. The stages of the processing are selection, choosing the data which have significance, for him; ordering the data; and experiment, testing the selection and ordering, by speaking.

The course designer's selection and arrangement versus the learner's

Now for the child's foreign-language learning, the course designer sets out to do the selection and ordering: *he* chooses what is to be learnt, and in what order. The course designer's choice is made according to the performance he wants, and he assumes, so to say, that the children's own selecting and ordering activity must either cease or give way. However, the children's activity does not stop, and often does not give way: the children's own mental processes, provided with data from previous experience, have been at work on the course designer's already selected and ordered data when they produce *he go, two book*, and so on.

The course designer and the teacher have here the principle of least effort against them; but believe that with more and more control the wanted 'speech habits' will be acquired. The outcome remains, as the statesmen say, with History. In the meantime, we have the issue in the classroom, as a practical and, indeed, as a moral problem. The moral problem is no less serious than the practical one. When a learner uses mental operations which we should encourage, and thereby produces forms which are not standard English, which better deserves our respect, the product of the child's organisation, or standard English? Few American, British, or European teachers of English would be willing to

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[1] In *The Genesis of Language*, ed. F. Smith and G. A. Miller, M.I.T. Press, 1966, p. 107.

come down on the side of the Asian child's organisation (*he want, two book* etc.); some Asian teachers would, and do. However, all teachers need to realise that there are two sides to the question. I will consider the general issues, and some particular instances of the conflict of interest.

General considerations

Perhaps the chief general considerations are (a) the importance we give to standard forms, (b) the importance we give to psychological considerations, (c) the importance we give to social considerations. My feeling is that we give too much attention to (a) and too little to (b) and (c).

(a) The importance of standard English

Many foreign-language teachers take over the possessive attitude which teachers of the mother tongue have towards standard forms, regarding the language they teach as property which must be protected from misuse. A more neutral view is needed: English is no longer the property of native speakers, or of school teachers.

Many teachers believe we should *aim* for native speaker's written and spoken English even if we do not expect to achieve it, for without native speaker's English as a model, it is said, international intelligibility will not be possible. However, improvement in understanding may be made from the listening side as well as from the speaking side—and perhaps it may be made more economically from the listening side, as, of course, the tape-recorder now permits. Professional interpreters, the people most interested in international spoken communication, expect and prepare to encounter a *variety* of types of each language they use: no interpreters' school would think of limiting its students' experience to a standard.

Teachers usually think too highly of the financial and prestige advantages of standard English. Certainly in diplomatic and in international business circles, standard English is useful. However, considering people at that level we are far from the real life prospects of average children in an Asian classroom.

(b) Psychological considerations

For learning to take place, there must be motivation. In this respect, there is a great difference between Asia and Europe. The ideal of much European language teaching is that during the foreign-language lesson the learner ceases to be the person he is outside the classroom and becomes the person he would have been if he had been born in that foreign country. This is not

unrealistic: it is not difficult for a French schoolgirl to imagine she is an English schoolgirl, or *vice versa*. Willingness to pretend is thus the basis for strong personal motivation to imitate.

For many reasons, this European ideal does not motivate Asian learners. For one thing, Asians are visibly not Americans or Englishmen; there is little attraction in a pretence in which learners cannot believe. It follows that classroom techniques based on imitation of native speakers have a psychological motivation in Europe which they do not have in Asia.

The most obvious source of motivation in Asian classes would be interest in the learning material itself, if courses for Asia were designed with motivation as a first consideration. They are not. Motivation is taken for granted, and it is usually a 'structural progression' which determines the content of the learning material.

Present-day courses for Asians are proving more difficult than was expected. So far, a common course-designer's reaction has been to reduce the vocabulary: such courses tend in any case to use 'content words' mainly to 'operate the structures'.

However, we are realising that it is not so much repetition which produces learning as repetition of effort, and for effort to be produced there must be both motivation and opportunity. A further concession to the learner is therefore advocated, and we must welcome it: it is 'contextualisation', giving a context to the material which is practised.

However, a smaller vocabulary and contextualisation are not the answer to the kind of difficulties we have been considering. The general weakness of the tightly controlled, teacher-centred course may be poor motivation, resulting in less learning than is reasonable, but the typical difficulties of Asian learners are due to strong rational pressure to produce particular unwanted forms. Contextualisation does nothing here.

If children learned one thing at a time, as the item-by-item syllabus suggests, if imitation and memorising constituted the whole learning process, then, given motivation, the course designer's selection and progression would meet with no resistance, and learning could not fail to take place. However, since items interact, since children do not simply imitate but actively scan the language input for meaningful regularity, since the brain constitutionally disregards non-significant elements of the input, then the course designer's selection and progression take second place whenever he provides an input of two or more items which interact, whenever his input items disturb meaningful regularity, whenever he attempts to impose non-significant features. As we have seen, the points of redundancy in the language itself offer repeated occasion for the course designer's selection and progression to give way.

Then, at each point at which the course designer's arrangements have come into conflict with the learner's, a familiar sequence of events takes place: (i) the pupil produces economical English, which is interpreted as a 'mistake'; (ii) the teacher sets 'remedial work', i.e. tries to insist on uneconomical English; (iii) the pupil stops learning.

(c) *Sociological considerations*

I have tried to look at certain grammatical features of English from the point of view of a child in a school classroom, assuming that his brain is an efficiency-seeking organism. In this classroom he is able to exercise a natural initiative in rejecting, modifying, accepting, or reconstructing the learning material—because the teacher has thirty or forty other children to look after at the same time.

Many language-teaching experts see clearly enough that learner initiative frequently leads to 'mistakes', and therefore disapprove the initiative. They know that when one can occupy a child's mental activity completely one can get psychologically resisted forms past the barrier raised by the brain. 'Direct method' techniques, correctly used, do this, and for this reason they are widely recommended. Essentially, the learner is trained to respond to 'cues' without pause for any response except the one provided; and indeed the elimination of an interval between teacher stimulus and learner response is the key to success.

However, such intensity of psychological occupation of a learner is not really possible except with very small groups. Thus, in classrooms with thirty learners we most often see pseudo-high intensity teaching in what is actually a low intensity teaching situation. We have discouragement of initiative, but inadequate 'surrender' to the high-intensity techniques.

In fact, with little compensation in achievement, English-language teaching in Asia has taken an illiberal turn. School programmes are prescribed in detail, the aim being control of 'every word and every step in every oral lesson'. The obedient teacher is necessarily a person striving for tighter and tighter control of his pupils. In the name of control, large numbers of children are deprived of the opportunity of independent learning. Many are not even allowed to practise on their own, for homework is discouraged. The glossaries which used to be at the back of the course-books have gone; and the learners come to depend on the teacher for every word.

The name usually given to attempted high-intensity teaching is 'drilling'. It is not difficult to see the wider social implications of chorus responses to a time-beating instructor. Its moral for

even the most intelligent children is that success in the classroom is easiest achieved by non-rational submission to authority.

Another way?

It is easy to get into a groove. So, when pupils say *he go, ten dog* and so on, the most usual reaction is to want to 'drill those mistakes out' with 'remedial exercises': since the English language, the course designer and the teacher cannot be wrong, the learner must be. Perhaps if we were able to see that the English language *can* be 'wrong', we can develop a different approach to the difficulties of Asian learners.

Three particular instances

We will now consider three typical 'mistakes', assuming (a) that redundant features are involved, (b) that an active brain is exercising its function of assessing efficiency in terms of success in communication, (c) that exact imitation of native speakers' model English does not have first importance, (d) that pupil motivation has to be considered.

1. Indiscriminate use of 'isn't it?'

Here we have a straightforward instance of 'mistakes' (*You are Hashim, isn't it?* etc.) due to the learners' rejection of redundancy. The attempt to impose the use of 44 forms when the mother tongue shows that 43 of them are redundant deserves the failure it gets, for the value of the achievement in communication terms would bear no sensible relation to the cost in learning effort. Communication without tag questions is in no way peculiar, and there is, then, a simple, obvious, and effective solution to this difficulty: not to teach tag questions.

2. Omission of plural -s

Plural indication is redundant when previous mention or situation makes the plural reference clear; and, of course, singular indication is redundant when the singular reference is clear. In such circumstances, Asian languages use stem forms. Naturally, therefore, Asian children do not interpret the stem form of an English noun as singular by form, but by context; and when, as is usual in the classroom, a plural context is visible for the stem + s form, the -s is, for them, non-significant, and being non-significant, is not noticed; or, superficially noticed, is not registered.

Course-design considerations with respect to plural -s are not entirely like those for tag questions. First, though English

without tag questions is not strange to anyone, English without plural -*s* is, for many users of English. Next, the learning load, though unreasonable, is not so impossibly heavy for the value of the achievement. Let us see what can be done.

Clearly, the usual visual presentation of the singular/plural contrast (e.g. *showing* and saying *one pen—three pens*) is ineffective. When we see that the nature of the difficulty is lack of significance, we realise too the uselessness of relying on repetition to establish the plural form.

Our position is, therefore, weak, but it is not hopeless. For a presentation we can use situations in which the singular/plural distinction is *not* apparent, and must therefore (if significant) be marked in language. In the children's mother tongue, a plural marker of some kind is available for just such situations; and the plural -*s* is therefore seen as equivalent to the mother-tongue plural marker. Continuing along the line of this approach, significance for the learner, we can also devise practice exercises into which significance is artificially imported, that is, in which the learner's attention to the presence or absence of -*s* is made an element in comprehension. Success cannot be guaranteed, but is made more likely through the analysis of the learning situation.

3. *Uncertainty over tenses*
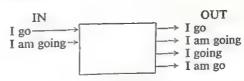
Errors in the verb-form area have a background of redundancy, but also one of mutual interference among the forms, usually the result of statistical distortion introduced by the course designer. With its two tenses, English is challenge enough to our children's patience. To add parallel sets of 'progressive tenses' and 'passive' forms is course-designer folly. Small, clearly defined places have to be found for *have/has/had* stem + -*ed*, but the third or fourth year is soon enough for them. In the courses I know, the descriptions and presentations of the functions of the 'tenses' are plainly incorrect when they are referred to a corpus of any size,[1] and conditions for optional use are often presented as conditions for obligatory use.[2]

When items are introduced regardless of their frequency of occurrence in ordinary English, interactions among the forms are predictable, and occur:
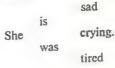
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[1] E.g. the Simple Present forms do not have as their main function the representation of habitual occurrences, as is so frequently stated.

[2] One popular course tells the learner, 'suppose we want to say that Pedro *learned* English before he came to England. . . . We say 'Pedro *had learned* English before he came to England'. The author's own use of *learned* in his description shows that the use he is presenting is optional, i.e. redundant.

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        IN                              OUT
  I go ─────────→ ┌─────────┐ ──→ I go
  I am going ──→  │         │ ──→ I am going
                  │         │ ──→ I going
                  │         │ ──→ I am go
                  └─────────┘
```

Again, when we are aware of the processes which produce the unwanted forms, other presentations suggest themselves. *-ing* forms are more frequent as attributive adjectives (e.g. as in *a smiling face*) than as items in verb-groups. Many adjectives fit, without learning difficulty, into a predicative sentence position. So do the *-ing* forms, and, incidentally, many *-ed* forms too:

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                          sad
              is
      She              crying.
              was
                          tired
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Even without teaching considerations in mind, there is much to be said for dealing with *-ing* and *-ed* forms in this way, i.e. as predicative adjuncts to the sentence subject. With Asian learners such simplification is essential.

Summary and suggestions

I have pointed out the presence of uneconomical features in English, and the consequent conflict of interest between the economy-seeking activity of the learner's brain and the performance-oriented prescription of the course designer. I have described the context of the teacher's attempt to impose a standard performance, and have questioned its desirability in psychological and in social terms. I have shown that elementary costing is possible, i.e. assessing what for the learner will be the cost in learning effort, what will be the likely return for the effort, and how the learner himself will estimate the return; and I have shown that costing of this kind can suggest alternative procedures and strategies. For effective work with Asian students, orderliness and economy of input are essential. A great simplification of grammatical items, under frequency control, may just make English a reasonable investment of learning effort in the beginning years.

Indian Scripts and the Teacher of English

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STUDIES OF PHONOLOGICAL INTERFERENCE with the English of Indian learners of the language have been fairly numerous in recent years, despite the fact that in my experience, and that of many teachers I have talked to, pronunciation responds rather poorly to concentrated classroom effort. Although the facts of the contrasts between sound systems are often very interesting to the teacher and may illuminate some errors very clearly, the learning of the details of pronunciation has to be a process of almost unconscious assimilation. Writing, however, is a much slower mechanical process than speech and its mechanisms are much more accessible to instruction and training than the articulatory musculature. Attention can quite naturally be paid to correcting particular faults in detail. It would therefore seem that detailed information about the nature of Indian writing systems might be of interest and use to teachers concerned with introducing Indian and Pakistani pupils to the writing of English. This article discusses some specific points about the structure of the scripts in use in Northern India and Pakistan that differentiate them sharply from the English writing system.[1]

Devanagari

The Devanagari scripts derive from the Sanskrit writing system and are today used for a number of important North Indian languages, including Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi (or Gurmukhi), and the joint official language of India, Hindi. It is quite common for an Indian pupil to have learned to read and write his own language, say Punjabi, and then to have learned Hindi as well, so that he comes to learn English as a third language and already has writing habits formed in two different versions of Devanagari.

Devanagari is not really an alphabetic script in the way that English writing is. The 'consonant' symbols are best thought of as representing a *syllable* of the language consisting of a consonant plus a short, low-central vowel which we can represent by /ə/. Since this vowel does not occur at the end of a word, Hindi,

for example, can use the consonant symbol to represent a final consonant sound, and thus writes the borrowed English word /bəs/, meaning 'bus', with just two symbols: the sign for /b/ followed by the sign for /s/. This phenomenon of the vowel that is 'understood' is common to all the Indo-European languages of the area. The reader may have noticed that he sometimes sees 'Gujarati' and sometimes 'Gujrati' in print; the vowel after the *j* is not represented in writing but is present in the spoken form, so there are two alternative ways of romanising the word.

It will be seen that the juxtaposition of two consonant symbols in Devanagari script does not indicate a consonant cluster as it does in English. To represent a cluster of two consonants, a composite symbol is made up, and it might have little relation to the shapes of the letters representing its component sounds. To illustrate this with Hindi letters: the sign ट represents /ţ/ and र represents /r/, so that put together thus टर they would represent /ţər/. If the cluster /ţr/ occurs in a word, the composite symbol ट्र must be used. The composite symbol now behaves like an ordinary consonant symbol: it is understood to be followed by the vowel /ə/ except under certain conditions (such as being at the end of a word).

This feature of the Devanagari scripts is not to be pinpointed as the sole source of errors such as 'prental' for *parental* or 'drectly' for *directly;* there are a large number of other factors in play, and the whole question of stress and vowel reduction in English is a very complex one. But it should not be ignored that quite a conceptual switch is involved in the transition from a syllable-orientated system, in which a neutral vowel may not be represented at all, to that of English, which in some ways is more morpheme-orientated than phoneme-orientated and in which the same unstressed, mid-central vowel can have a number of different written representations (compare the first vowels in each of these words in normal speech: *affected, tenacious, directory, commend, subordinate*). Since it is exactly this kind of error, over where vowels should be written, that Indian pupils make, it is likely that the structure of written words in their native language is at least one of the factors influencing them when they are forced through ignorance of what is correct to make a guess at an English spelling.

Devanagari scripts are written from left to right, but because the syllable is considered a kind of unit, there are some cases of words in which the left-right order does not correspond to the order in which the speech sounds occur. Vowels provide one example. Vowels that follow consonants in the spoken form of a word are shown in the writing system as appendages to the consonant, above, below, or on either side of it; the long vowel

/e/ in Hindi, for instance, is shown by a symbol > over the consonant it follows. A Hindi spelling for the English word *tape*[1] might be टेप (प stands for /p/). However, the short vowel /i/ happens to be represented by the symbol ि which is attached on the *left* of the consonant it follows in speech. If there was a Hindi word with the form /ṭip/ it would therefore be spelt टिप. First the medial vowel, then the initial consonant, then the final consonant.

The representation of Hindi /r/ provides even more striking examples of this. There are a dozen or more irregular forms representing combinations of /r/ plus other consonants like the one given earlier for /ṭr/. In some words where /r/ comes before another consonant it is shown by the symbol ˚ *over* the consonant it precedes; thus in the word /pa:rk/ 'park' it is over the /k/ (क), thus पर्क. Notice that /a:/ is shown by the symbol ा on the *right* of the consonant it follows. Now consider the spelling of the word /wərʃa:/—a real Hindi word for once; it means 'rain'. The first syllable, /wə/, is taken care of by just the consonant sign व. The final syllable is /ʃa:/, represented thus षा. The little curl to show the /r/ is now attached to this last group— but, as it happens, above the right-hand side of it thus: र्षा. So the whole thing is वर्षा, and reading from left to right we have, first, the initial consonant, then the third consonant, and then the final vowel with the second consonant on top of it.

What might make this of interest to the teacher of English is the question of whether the transposition errors that so often crop up (with native children as well as foreign learners) might be more likely with learners who already read and write Devanagari scripts and whether this feature of those scripts goes any way towards explaining why. Certainly misspellings like 'wanring' for *warning* do occur and the comparison with Hindi usage is suggestive; but it should be pointed out that although English letters normally represent single sounds strung out in strict left-right order and Devanagari employs something more like bunches denoting syllables, examples of comparable ordering anomalies could be found in English spelling if you looked hard enough; the vowel sound in the word *fine* is represented in a peculiar way, and if you pronounce *which* differently from *witch* then you must regularly write *wh-* to represent phonetic [hw]. Perhaps the misleading possible analogies one can draw with respect to linearity do not contribute to the incidence of transposition errors as much as plain carelessness does. It would be rather hard to tell.

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[1]Hindi borrows a lot of English words. No false impressions are being given if I restrict my example to English words or nonsense syllables.

Letter shapes and positioning

Without a doubt the most intransigent difficulty encountered by the teacher of North Indian pupils does result directly from the contrasting nature of the writing systems in which their habits have been formed; it is also the most immediately noticeable feature in the beginner's work. It is concerned with the relative size of the letters and their positioning in relation to the line on the page.

This is a problem for the pupil used to Devanagari, but it equally affects, for different reasons, those who have learned to read and write in the modified Persi-Arabic scripts that are used for writing such languages as Urdu, Sindhi, Baluchi, Kashmiri, and Punjabi (in Pakistan).

Let us first look at the way Devanagari writing is designed. It will have been noticed immediately by anyone who has seen any Devanagari in print that there is a horizontal line, usually unbroken, running across the top of each word. Each letter is, as it were, suspended from a bar, so that with adjacent letters the bar connects up; in some cases extensions may be made above the bar or below the body of the letter but basically shapes of uniform size are positioned *below* a line. In contrast, English writing sits *on* the line, but has extensions either upwards or downwards that give some letters a completely different size from others. It is a good idea to pay explicit attention to this fact during writing lessons; young pupils can be encouraged to personify the alphabet: some letters are little ones that sit curled up on the line, some are tall ones that stand up on the line, and some are long but have to hang from the line by their chins (little *e*, tall *l*, hanging *y*, for instance). English letters are positioned as though they were birds sitting on telegraph wires, whether the lines are in fact real, as in a pupil's exercise-book, or imaginary, as they are in print; Devanagari letters are positioned more like washing hanging from a clothes-line, whether the line is real as in Hindi, Gurmukhi, or Bengali print, or imagined as in Oriya printing, or as in normal cursive writing in any of these scripts.

This difference really does show up in the written work produced by some beginners. Letters will nestle closely up to the top line, or sometimes wander down through the bottom line. Sizes will be completely out of proportion, with small *p* standing up on the line to become indistinguishable from capital *P*, or a correctly drawn small *y* sitting above the line instead of hanging with the tail below. Later on, the pupil may be learning to standardise letter-size, and will overdo it by making *l* as small as an *i* without a dot. It will be remembered that Hindi letters that might be said to have a 'tail' are the same size overall as those with, say, round shapes—compare प, ट, and English *p, c*.

Where pupils have previous experience of writing the Persi-Arabic script the fundamental point about the switch of systems is, of course, that Arabic scripts are all written and read from right to left. Given the enormous preponderance of right-handed people throughout the world this seems less natural than writing from left to right, for the hand tends to cover what has just been written as it moves. Perhaps to obviate this, writing in an Arabic script tends to drift downwards, *through* the line, each word starting fairly high on the right and usually descending in a series of long curves; the small hooks and oblique bars indicating the vowels are then filled in above the basic shape. In some ways, therefore, the Arabic scripts are also based on a unit thought of as a consonant base to which vowels are added, and in fact most adults do not even bother to fill in the vowels at all when they are writing a letter; and most printing indicates only the long vowels (though the sacred Quran is always printed with all the vowels marked). However, children are always taught from the start to mark all the vowels when they write in school, so that putting in vowels is not likely to be the main problem for them in learning to write English. Their problem is going to be that everything about the way they write, from their sitting-position at the desk to the way they hold the pen, is designed for right-to-left work. In the course of struggling to write in the opposite direction, the pupil may bear down on the paper much too hard and will probably have great difficulty in simultaneously holding the line of writing straight and level, and keeping track of the relative sizes of the individual letters. A glance at some written or even printed Urdu, for instance, will show how far from uniform in size the individual symbols are in an Arabic script. Every word sweeps in from the right with a long stroke, generally from above, and tails off into another long stroke to the left, usually downwards. A letter positioned at the beginning of a word therefore has a very different shape from the shape it would have in final position—there are, in fact, different forms for each letter.

Capital letters

Almost as prevalent a feature of the learner's early work as the uneven size and positioning of the letters will be the large number of mistakes involving capital letters, whether they are missing from where they should be or inserted where they should not be.

Neither the Devanagari scripts nor the Arabic ones have any analogue to the European upper and lower case. Not only is there the necessity—especially in handwriting—of knowing two different forms of each letter, some of them hardly related at all,

like g and G, but with English there is also a distribution pattern to be mastered for these totally redundant upper-case variants that must seem highly capricious if not quite arbitrary to the learner at times. The German system might be said to relate to the grammar—nouns are picked out and marked with an initial capital—but English marks only certain words with the feature of being the names of *individual* people, places, or things, plus the first letters of sentences and certain special cases like *Dr* or *I*. To have special forms for the initial letter of a word is not alien to either the Devanagari-trained pupil or to one used to writing an Arabic script; Arabic has the special initial, medial, and final forms for each letter, and Devanagari employs independent forms to represent the vowels when they appear at the beginning of a word (or follow another vowel). But the English system is more complicated than that, and the teacher can expect the dual problem of the capitals—using the right shape, and using it in the right places—to be a primary source of errors in the learner's work for a considerable time.

Conclusion

It is important to realise that the chief value of the facts brought out by a look at contrasts between systems such as we have been taking (as with any contrastive linguistic analysis) lies in the occasional insight provided for the teacher into where certain characteristic and persistent errors might originate. No claims should be made for contrastive linguistics that imply it has anything to say about how the teacher should teach, let alone that points of contrast should be stressed and harped upon; a conscious comparison of structures could not conceivably help any but the most linguistically sophisticated student.

However, it could be very useful for the teacher to have in mind an idea of the extent to which the system being taught is different from anything the learner already knows. In the present case, the point might be that it is misleading to think the Indian or Pakistani pupil who has had schooling in his own language knows one alphabet and is now learning another. As has been indicated, the basis of the English alphabet is rather different from that of any of the North Indian scripts. The linguistic analyst might say that English writes an approximation to a string of morphophonemes, Devanagari writes a string of symbols indicating the phonetic shape of syllables, and the Arabic type of script writes a string denoting the consonantal skeleton structure of words.

What the teacher needs to provide is an introduction to the writing of English that is painstaking and thorough enough for the learner never to find himself in ignorance of the way to

write something which he has to express in writing. It is only when his training has failed to tell him enough about what he has to do, that he might be tempted to fill in the gaps in his knowledge by references to the knowledge of writing that he already has in another language.[1]

Linguistic Relativity and the EFL Teacher in South Africa

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THE TERM 'linguistic relativity' conjures up the names Wilhelm von Humboldt and the neo-Humboldtians in Europe; and Franz Boas, Edward Sapir, and Benjamin Lee Whorf in America; and much earlier and certainly much later writers, if one goes far enough into the literature.

Although linguistic relativity, which I shall succinctly define here as 'the relationship between language structure and mentality (or thought)', is considered by some linguists in the United States to be merely esoteric, by others to be unworthy of serious study or consideration, I feel that the problem is worth looking into because of what might be gained by such an approach in language teaching, especially in such countries as the Republic of South Africa, where speakers of languages not at all related to the official languages are in such a preponderance.

I should like to apply this study to research I am concerned with in the teaching of the official languages of South Africa, English and Afrikaans, to non-native speakers, and especially to Zulu-, Xhosa-, and Swazi-speaking citizens.

In 1954, the South African government ruled that Africans must be educated in the junior school in their own tribal languages, instead of mainly in English, as before. High-school education continued mainly in English.

In an effort to bring Afrikaans up to the level of co-official English, the government ruled in 1969 that education in African high schools had to be conducted in both English and Afrikaans.

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[1] For a powerful argument for viewing interference phenomena in this way, see L. Newmark and D. Reibel, 'Necessity and Sufficiency in Language Learning', *IRAL*, VI, 2 (May 1968), p. 145.

The situation has created some friction and problems, but much can be accomplished if a correct approach is made.

There have arisen, in recent years, questions concerning the quality of the teaching of and in the official languages in various areas of the Republic, especially in the Transkei.[1] Most of the controversy has centred on the preparation and qualifications of teachers, and on the teachers' ability to instruct the students in the standard dialects of the official languages. Certainly, if a teacher has had poor training in the official languages, or if the training in the official languages has been adequate but the training in a functional approach to the teaching of the languages has not, then inferior results will be found in the classroom. This is only to be expected. A white non-native speaker of English, here an Afrikaaner, for instance, would have the same difficulty in teaching English; a white non-native speaker of Afrikaans, here an English-speaking South African, for instance, would have the same difficulty in teaching Afrikaans. (The truly bilingual speaker of English and Afrikaans would present another problem.) But this is merely a question of a good grounding in the idioms of two quite closely related (that is, Germanic) languages. Instruction in one of the official languages by a white native speaker of the other official language could certainly be inferior, but this inferiority is usually not marked. What often seems to be lacking is an interest in (and a healthy respect for) the other language on the instructor's part. Within the bounds of linguistic relativity, English and Afrikaans do not differ much, either semantically or grammatically, when compared to Xhosa, Zulu, or Swazi.

A poor quality of teaching of and in the official languages of South Africa in the schools of the Bantu-speaking nations may indeed be a result of poor teacher-training in the official languages. Poor student capabilities in the use of the official language may indeed be the result of inferior instruction. But I am not quite so sure that better instruction, producing better qualified teachers, who natively speak the language they are instructing, or teachers who have had sufficient training in the language, would solve the problem entirely.

One factor which may cause low scores on examinations in the official languages may be that students learning one or both of the official languages do not recognise or understand the formal systematisation of either English or Afrikaans, a systematisation above that ordinarily explained in traditional textbook grammars. They are not able to conceive the world about them, using the

[1]Branford, William. 'Official Languages in the Transkei,' *Theoria*, No. 21, 1964.

formal systematisation of either English or Afrikaans. (I do not mean to imply that the students are incapable of learning the formal systematisation of either English or Afrikaans; I simply mean to state that language instruction fails to take into consideration the fact that a specific systematisation will bring about a specific concept, as I shall discuss later.) Anyone who knows either English or Afrikaans knows perfectly well that neither is a perfect language or the only language for recognising and interpreting linguistically all the functional and non-functional aspects of the world. Needless to say, this goes for many languages and perhaps all (why is one language perfectly capable of complete expression without reference to gender, while another feels a need for this reference?).

I feel that any official language programme in the area of Bantu education must take into consideration linguistic relativity. This is absolutely essential! Not even the most fully qualified instructor in English or Afrikaans will be successful, totally successful, in teaching the official languages to the peoples of the Bantu-speaking nations unless this is done.

Linguistic relativity concerns 'weltanschauung' or worldview. The most forceful proponents of the theory have been Humboldt and Whorf, and in Europe, today, the neo-Humboldtians. Benjamin Lee Whorf believed that any language was perfectly capable of expression in its own direction, that it could express all world concepts within its own systematisation. At the same time he believed that, while doing so, any language could ignore equally perfect systems of expressing the same concepts. Whorf also believed that because the systematisation of one language ignored perfectly good ways of expressing events, this systematisation would not allow a native speaker of one language to view the world through the different systematisation of another; that is, a speaker looks at the world the way he does because his language forces him to do so.

Understanding the pattern of linguistic relativity is essential to any teaching of the official languages of South Africa to a speaker of a language whose language systematisation is vastly different from that of either English or Afrikaans, if the teaching of the official languages is to be successful.

An understanding of linguistic relativity calls for an understanding of the problems of semantic transfer. I hope that the days are gone when language teachers required a so-called word-for-word translation from one language to another. This is difficult even in closely related languages, such as English and Afrikaans, with similar overt semantic properties, not to mention difficulties with covert semantic properties. It is almost impossible with languages which have been shown to have no direct rela-

tionship to each other. The best that can be hoped for is an understanding of the concepts held in the languages being studied, and an ability to explain these concepts in the systematisation of the languages.

There are many questions which need to be answered. Are the official languages really capable of expressing 'things of everyday life' from the vastly different cultures of the Bantu-speaking nations? American linguistic studies have shown English to be almost incapable of expressing some of the concepts found in many American Indian languages. Ought we to expect either English or Afrikaans to be capable of complete or total expression of Zulu, Xhosa, Tswana, or Swazi concepts. I certainly do not deny the importance of the fact that the peoples of the Bantu-speaking nations of the Republic ought to know at least one of the official languages. This is beside the point. I am simply saying that in matters of language instruction, linguistic relativity, especially semantic transfer, needs to be considered, needs to play a prominent role.

Other questions which arise, and which I feel must be considered by anyone concerned with the teaching of the official languages, are:

1. At what grade level is the problem of semantic transfer most severe?
2. What formal systematisation of either English or Afrikaans causes the greatest difficulty with semantic transfer?
3. If the official languages are being taught by whites, do they fully understand the systematisation by which the Bantu language used by the student expresses the concepts of the world-view? Does the teacher explain in the classroom the differences between the official languages and the Bantu language in terms of this, instead of simply blurting out traditional rules of grammar, and having the students memorise meaningless conversations?
4. If the official languages are taught by non-whites, do they understand fully the systematisation by which English and Afrikaans view the world, and does the teacher explain the differences between the official languages and the languages of the students in terms of this?

Finally, one might ask this specific question: If a Xhosa-speaking person in the Transkei has a poor knowledge of either of the official languages, is this a result of improper instruction or a result of unknown semantic transference problems between the mother tongue and the official languages—or is it a result of both?

Linguistic and Paralinguistic Changes in Spanish-Speakers Learning English

HELENE FAITH LEVINE

Introduction and literature

DURING THE PAST few years there has been a continual influx of Spanish-speaking persons into the United States. These people have come from Puerto Rico and Cuba. Among the latter group of Spanish-speaking people, there are often highly educated professionals. With the great migration of these people into this country, it is imperative that English be learned quickly and as perfectly as possible if they are to assume positions in business, education, medicine, and politics. Because of this urgency, many colleges are offering courses in which English as a second language is taught to foreigners. These as well as other foreign-language learning courses are usually conversationally oriented, with part of the class time being spent in a language laboratory.

It is recognised that in certain areas it is difficult to define learning or the processes involved in learning; a problem therefore arises when one wants to measure whether learning has occurred or not. Criteria for measuring learning have not been established yet in the area of foreign-language learning.

Recently two techniques or tools have been developed that offer promise as effective means of measuring foreign-language learning: (1) delayed auditory feedback, and (2) cloze procedure.

The first method, delayed auditory feedback (hereafter designated as DAF), refers to an experimentally induced delay in the air-conducted return of a speaker's vocal output to his ears. Many effects appear under this induced delay of the auditory stimuli.

According to Fairbanks,[1] the speech system is a closed system and does not break down completely; consequently, any resulting disturbance varies both in amount and kind. Persons experiencing delayed side-tone generally exhibit one or more of the following reactions:[2]

1. The voice becomes either louder or higher.
2. Speech becomes slow.
3. Words, syllables, or phonemes are repeated.

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[1] See Fairbanks (1955). Full references are given at the end of this article.
[2] See Fairbanks, Black, Chase, Fairbanks and Guttman, and Peters.

4. Words are mispronounced.
5. The face becomes red.
6. The speaker's palms perspire.
7. The speaker appears to be struggling.
8. The speaker will stop talking completely.

These reactions can be grouped into three types of effects: (1) duration, (2) articulation, and (3) hesitation.

Results of research studies[1] have shown that a 0·2 second delay of delayed feedback produced the maximum disturbance to a person's speech.

As reported by Lee, Fairbanks, Tiffany and Hanley, Spilka, and Black, the duration of a reading passage, i.e. the time required to read a passage, increases with the DAF. The repetition of syllables and words has been noted to be the characteristic of disturbed articulation by Fairbanks and his students, and Chase, Sutton, Raspen, Standfast and Harvey.[2] That artificial stuttering, which is usually exhibited by additive errors, resembles the characteristics of hesitation phenomenon has been discussed by Lee and Fairbanks and Guttman. Maclay and Osgood, Boomer, Levin and Silverman, and Martin have written on the topic of hesitation phenomenon.

The second measuring device is cloze procedure, which is the application of clozure (i.e. the tendency to perceive forms as complete which are actually incomplete as physical events) to language. In using cloze procedure a message (written or oral) of approximately 250 words is mutilated, generally by deleting every fifth word. This mutilated version is presented to a group of subjects to complete. One point is scored for each fill-in which is the same as the deleted word: the total number of points is then designated as the 'cloze score'. One of the measures that can be inferred from the 'cloze score' is the degree to which the receiver understood the message despite its mutilated form; it is thus a measure of comprehension.

The validity of cloze procedure as a measure of comprehension has been tested by Taylor, who took two carefully matched comprehension tests which were based on the same article and made them into cloze tests by omitting certain words. The before and after cloze test results of the subjects correlated very highly with the before and after comprehension test results of the same subjects, demonstrating that the cloze test results serve as valid comprehension scores.

Another way to score the mutilated passage of cloze procedure is to credit the subject with a point if the word supplied is of the

[1] See Fairbanks, Fairbanks and Guttman, and Fors.
[2] See Smith, K. U.

same form-class of the word (the lexical units) omitted. It is permissible to do this since the items of form and arrangement have signalling significance only as they are patterns in a structural whole. The grammar of a language consists of the devices that signal structural meanings. In order to know the structural meanings signalled by the formal arrangements of sentences, one need not know the lexical meanings of the words but must know the form-classes to which the words belong. The form-classes are explained and detailed in a book by C. Fries. Scoring the passages for form-class would thus result in a score expressing the subject's performance of his English grammatical competency.

The present study was designed to examine the usefulness of DAF and cloze procedure as instruments for measuring change in competency and performance in the pronunciation and grammar of English of non-speaking English adult students learning English as a second language.

Methods and procedures

Subjects: Eleven adults whose native language was Spanish and who voluntarily attended a Saturday morning class for learning English served as subjects for the cloze procedure part of the experiment. Seven of these people served as subjects in the DAF phase of this experiment.

Speech stimulus: The speech material used for all experimental conditions in this study consisted of four passages from a speech 'Healthier than Healthy' by Karl Meninger. The length of each passage was approximately 250 words.

Apparatus: The apparatus used to produce DAF was a compact delayed feedback unit manufactured by Bell Telephone Laboratory. The delay time was set at 0·2 seconds since it has been shown that maximum disturbance occurs at this time delay.[1] The amplification level (measured by a sound pressure level meter) was 60 db. above the individual's threshold. Sixty db. was chosen because this level produces marked disturbance of the vocal output and a wide range of individual differences without resulting in extreme auditory discomfort to the subject. A Sony tape-recorder was placed next to the delayed feedback unit in order that a permanent recording of the subject's output during the course of the experiment could be made.

Experimental conditions: Six experimental conditions were carried out in this experiment; three at the beginning of the course and three at the end. These were: a before-clozure test, a before-reading session, a before-reading session with DAF (before DAF), an after-clozure test, an after-reading session,

[1]See Fors.

and an after-reading session with DAF (after DAF). Each subject served as his own control by reading the same passage for the before-reading session with DAF. A different passage was read for the after-reading session and the after-reading session with DAF. The passages were randomised among subjects in order to eliminate any order effects.

Cloze procedure was carried out with all the subjects at one time. Fifteen minutes were allotted for the subjects to fill in the blanks.

The reading sessions took place individually in a separate room. The subject was seated in a chair facing a table on which all the equipment was located. Each subject read the passage in an undelayed situation first and then a delayed situation. Before the DAF part of the test situation was carried out, each subject was instructed that the delayed feedback was not harmful and that he should try to continue reading normally.

Hypotheses: It is assumed that a person's competency and performance will change as a result of exposure to some learning situation. In order to investigate the change in competency and performance of Spanish-speaking adults who are learning English as a second language, four hypotheses were investigated in this study:

1. Cloze procedure scores, when calculated by the verbatum or form class method, will be higher after completion of the course than at the beginning.
2. The time required to read a passage under DAF will be greater than in an undelayed condition, both at the beginning and at the end of the course.
3. The difference in the number of hesitations between delayed and undelayed conditions will be greater at the beginning of the course than at the end of the course.
4. The number of hesitations will be greater at the beginning of the course than at the end of the course in both undelayed and DAF conditions.

Methods of analysis: Measurements for the cloze procedure part of the experiment were made directly from the subjects' papers. Two scores were obtained from each paper, an exact-word score and a form-class word score.

Measurements from the reading sessions were made from tape recordings of the subjects reading the speech material in the undelayed condition and in the delayed condition. By using an electric timer, the duration of time required for each subject to read each passage in the before-undelayed condition, the before-delayed condition, the after-undelayed condition, and the after-delayed condition was measured.

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In this investigation the following variables from various studies on hesitation phenomena were considered as measurable hesitations:

1. filled pauses: uh, uhm, er, wow, oh, a glottal catch, or comments;
2. unfilled pauses: (a) non-phonemic lengthening of phonemes (increased duration); (b) silence of unusual length within words or between words;
3. repeats: (a) of one or more lexical items;
                  (b) of less than a lexical item;
4. omissions: (a) of one or more lexical items;
                  (b) of less than a lexical item;
5. additions: of one or more lexical items;
6. word change (a) the word-change is of the same form-class; example—*the* for *this*;
                  (b) the word change is not of the same form-class; example—*it* for *at*.

In order to test for statistical significance, a two-tailed t-test was applied to the data obtained from the cloze procedure and a one-tailed t-test to the data from hesitations made in the undelayed and delayed feedback conditions for both the before- and after-test situations.

Results and discussion

The first hypothesis stated that 'cloze procedure scores, when calculated by the verbatum or form-class method, will be higher after completion of the course than at the beginning'. In order to test this hypothesis, the results from the initial investigation were subtracted from the results of the final investigation. When only verbatum fill-ins were marked correct, the results were not statistically significant at the ·05 level. However, when form-class fill-ins were scored, there was a significant difference between the initial investigation and the final investigation at the ·02 level ($t = 3 \cdot 1$). The results, as shown in Table IA, were not statistically significant, and therefore the hypothesis as applied to the verbatum scores could not be accepted. It was assumed by the writer that the grammar of these adult Spanish-speaking subjects who attended a class for a semester in learning English should improve. However, it was found that it did not; their ability in English grammar as measured in this study worsened significantly (Table 1B). One possible reason for this failure to find a significant difference could be due to the concentration put on the speaking or pronunciation aspect of the course.

The second hypothesis predicted that 'the time required to read a passage under DAF will be greater than in an undelayed

condition, both at the beginning and at the end of the course'.
The net difference in time, measured in seconds, between delayed
and undelayed readings by the seven subjects used in this part
of the experiment was greater at the beginning of the course
than at the end of the course. In other words, it took a signifi-
cantly longer time to read a passage in the beginning of the course
under DAF than at the end of the course; this finding, as illus-
trated in Table II, was significant at the ·02 significance level
(t = 3·143). The time difference required to read a passage in a
delayed condition rather than in an undelayed condition should
have been greater in both the initial investigation and final
investigation; yet it was not. It was only greater at the beginning
of the course. This does not usually occur under DAF, where
research studies have shown that duration increases with DAF.

The third hypothesis is that 'the difference in number of hesita-
tions, between delayed and undelayed conditions, will be greater
at the beginning and at the end of the course'. In investigating the
difference between the frequency of hesitations between the
DAF condition and the undelayed condition, one-tail t-tests were
performed for each type of hesitation. The results are shown in
Table III and are summarised as follows:

1. Filled pauses: not significant at the ·05 level;
2. Unfilled pauses: not significant at the ·05 level;
3. Repeats: total: significant at the ·025 level (t = 2·45);
   (a) of one or more lexical item: not significant at the ·05
   level; (b) of less than a lexical item: significant at the ·05
   level (t = 2·1);
4. Omissions; not significant at the ·05 level;
5. Additions: significant at the ·01 level (t = 1·9):
6. Word change: not significant at the ·05 level.

There was a significantly greater number of repeats of less than
a lexical item made under DAF during the initial investigation.
Since these subjects' knowledge of English was extremely unsure
at the beginning of the course, it was thought that the difference
between all types of hesitations would be greater at the beginning
of the course than at the end of the course for the delayed
auditory feedback condition rather than for the undelayed
condition. As previously mentioned, this was found to occur at a
significant level (·05), however, only for repeats of less than a
lexical item and at the ·01 level for additions of words or
phrases.

'The number of hesitations will be greater at the beginning
of the course than at the end of the course in both undelayed and
delayed auditory feedback conditions' is the fourth hypothesis.
When looking at the number of hesitations in both delayed and

undelayed conditions at the beginning of the course and at the end of the course, different results occur for different types of hesitations. The results observed from Table IV can be summarised as follows:

1. Filled pauses: not significant at the ·05 level;
2. Unfilled pauses: (a) not significant at the ·05 level under DAF; (b) significant at the ·05 level (t = 2·0) under an undelayed condition;
3. Repeats: not significant at the ·05 level;
4. Omissions: (a) significant at ·05 level (t = 2·56) under DAF: (b) significant at ·01 level (t = 3·45) under an undelayed condition; (c) of one or more lexical item: not significant at the ·05 level under DAF or under an undelayed condition; (d) of less than a lexical item: significant at the ·05 level under DAF (t = 4·0) and at the ·05 level under an undelayed condition (t = 3·9);
5. Additions: not significant at the ·05 level;
6. Word change: not significant at the ·05 level.

Besides omissions of more than a lexical item and omissions of less than a lexical item, unfilled pauses were found to be significant at the ·05 level when investigating the idea that the number of hesitations in both delayed and undelayed conditions would be greater during the initial investigation than during the final investigation. These findings on hesitations under DAF are considerably less than what was expected.

These present findings may have some bearing on the conduct of courses in English-language learning. It appears from these findings that the subjects have become unsure of themselves. There is no denying that their pronunciation has greatly improved, but it seems that they may be overly concentrating on pronunciation. This may be one of the reasons why the duration required to read under DAF during the final investigation did not increase as it usually does; these subjects may have been blocking out the delayed auditory feedback by concentrating on pronunciation. This concentration may possibly account for the lack of types and frequency of hesitations that were found in their reading.

While pronunciation has improved, it is evident from the cloze scores that grammar has worsened. Again, too much emphasis may be put on pronunciation and not enough on grammar, so that the subjects may become quite unsure of themselves in this area over a period of time.

The usefulness of DAF and cloze procedure should be clear from the results of this study. These tools, DAF and cloze procedure, are effective measuring devices of the progress by

students and of the direction of teaching in courses for foreign-language learning.

Summary

In order to investigate the competency and performance of Spanish-speaking adults who were learning English, eleven subjects were given a before- and after-clozure test in English, while seven of these eleven subjects were, also, given a passage to read in an undelayed condition and a delayed auditory feedback condition at the beginning and end of the course.

It was found through cloze procedure that the subject's ability to handle English worsened during the semester, while their pronunciation, as indicated by a decrease or lack of hesitations, improved. This may have some implication for the direction and appropriateness of our courses for teaching a foreign language.

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English Language Teaching in a Texas Bilingual Programme

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I told my sister, Sarita, that the sun is a sphere and that it is a three-dimensional shape. But Sarita from the first grade said, 'It doesn't look like a sphere to me. It looks like a two-dimensional circle.'

The preceding statement was made by a second-grade child (aged seven) during classroom discussion. Such statements may be commonplace in many classrooms across the United States, just as they are in this one. Why is this one noteworthy?

It is noteworthy because it was made by a Mexican American child in a San Antonio, Texas, classroom where the great majority of children had previously been unsuccessful in learning to read, write, or speak the English language.

Prior to 1964 all non-English-speaking Mexican American children entering first grade were enrolled in the same instructional programme as were native English-speaking children. However, the Mexican American children had been unsuccessful in their reading efforts. Apparently such failure was due in part to lack of English-language experience.

Area educators noted that linguistic studies point to the primacy of oral fluency in programmes of language learning. Thus they began development of a programme designed to teach oral English quickly and effectively in order to develop readiness for reading.

Although strong emphasis has continued to be placed on oral English fluency, various dimensions have been added to the programme in the past six years. Children receive instruction in their native Spanish as well as in English. Such instruction enables

them to progress in learning subject-matter at the same time-
they are learning English. Thus they lag behind other first-grade
children only in English-language development. In addition,
the children learn to read and write in their native language,
Spanish, making themselves truly bilingual.

It was thought also that students going through a programme
in which their own language and culture were not rejected or
ignored by the school might see themselves as successful and
worthwhile. In other words, they would have a positive self-
image. Possibly their high-school teachers would not describe
them as did one high-school teacher in San Antonio in 1968.
She wrote of her Mexican American students: 'It is very difficult
to convince these students that a lack of English is not a lack
of intelligence. They feel second-rate and no one who feels
second-rate can do first-rate work.'

Developers of the programme elected to teach language
through subject-matter. They believe that this approach makes
language learning more meaningful than do approaches using
textbook exercises. In supporting this approach Mr González
states:

> The purpose of such an approach is the prevention of a common weakness
> of language in an academic vacuum. It is now felt that language develops
> faster and more efficiently if it is taught in a manner supporting and relating
> to the schools' academic programmes. In essence, language should be developed
> parallel to the development of academic concepts rather than isolated as a
> school 'subject'.

Because available textbooks do not make this approach to
language learning, the Southwest Educational Development
Laboratory is developing new curriculum materials. These
are designed by curriculum specialists and writing teams, pilot-
tested in classroom situations, and revised—steps in the labora-
tory's educational development sequence. Content from *AAAS:
A Process Approach to Science* is being adapted for use in the
programme. The American Association for the Advancement
of Science materials were selected because they are 'culture fair',
that is, they present an equal challenge to pupils of differing
cultures, ethnic groups, and social classes. Science materials
have been developed for grades one to five, and social studies
materials for grades one to three. Reading and mathematics
materials, developed by the laboratory, are also being tested
in a small number of classes during the 1968–69 school year.
Plans are to add a grade each year until a bilingual programme
is complete for kindergarten up to the sixth grade. Some children
participating in the programme will enter the regular San Antonio
public school classes in grade seven. By 1971, however, when the
first of the bilingual programme students will enter seventh

grade, the San Antonio Independent School District will be ready with a programme to provide continuity in bilingual education through a 'secondary bilingual sequence', now being planned.

The approach mentioned above to teaching language through subject-content might best be perceived by describing a visit to a first-grade classroom. Children learn about geometric shapes while learning basic structural patterns of English. Techniques for foreign-language teaching are practised by the teacher as she works toward fluency in oral English. Class sessions are structured to provide maximum language-exposure and practice. They may include drills such as the following:

Teacher, holding a piece of paper shaped like a circle says: 'Listen. What's this? It's a circle. Class, what's this? It's a circle. 'What's this? It's a circle.' 'Class, what's this?' The class responds 'It's a circle'. 'Jose, is this a square?' she asks. 'No, it isn't, it's a circle', he states, after the correct response has been well internalised.

The teacher continues with group and individual practice.

Both subject-matter and linguistic patterns are reinforced and developed daily. Children in the programme become intensely aware of the possibility of extending the concepts they are learning to the world around them at the same time as they are learning the language. One group of first graders, for example, was naming items which they knew were cubes. Some children had named boxes and dice. Then Mario said 'Our refrigerator makes cubes'.

Alberto quickly added 'Ours doesn't. It makes rectangular prisms.'

On another occasion, a teacher observed two first-graders looking over her new Easter bulletin board. One said 'It's an egg'. Another child replied 'Yes, and it's half an ellipsoid'.

This type of participation by Mexican American children is quite different from that in classrooms in other Texas schools where children have not mastered the language patterns necessary for such discussion and have not learned basic school concepts because of their inability to understand spoken English.

Prototype reading materials using content from the science programme and language patterns from the oral language programme were developed during the summer of 1968. Because they are based on known language-content, the materials capitalise on the strengths of the children—their knowledge of certain language-patterns and subject-matter. Weaknesses in phonology are remedied by structured lessons in oral English. Thus the teacher of reading is working with only new graphic symbols and not new sounds.

First, the children read sentences which they have learned in oral pattern-practice. When they are able to recognise the language pattern, they learn to substitute known words into slots, and finally look at the unique elements of the various words. Then they proceed to the study of words and letters.

A visit to a second-grade classroom illustrates this approach. At the time of the visit the class was considering the area of work. On the previous day the teacher, Mrs Ortega, had asked a series of questions about work. The children had answered orally, and their answers had been recorded.

For the current day's exercise, the teacher had written their answers and their names on a large tablet. As the class got under way, Mrs Ortega repeated one of yesterday's questions: 'What is work, Linda?'

Linda read her sentence as Mrs Ortega made a sweeping left to right gesture beneath it: 'Work is sweeping the floor.'

'What is work, class?' asked the teacher.

'Work is sweeping the floor', they replied.

The teacher repeated this, with standard pronunciation of *sweeping* three times, then called on the class and on individual children.

The lesson continued with various children reading their sentences, followed by class reading. As the children encountered difficulties, the teacher served as a model and called for additional practice from groups or individuals as needed.

Answers to the second question were read in a similar fashion as Mrs Ortega asked: 'Paul, what work does your father do?' She held a marker under the sentence.

'My father paints houses', read Paul.

'Paul, will you come and help me?' She handed him a card reading *Paul's*. 'Will you hold this card over the word *my* in your sentence?'

Paul held the card in place as Mrs Ortega asked: 'What work does Paul's father do?'

The class read 'Paul's father paints houses'.

The lesson continued with children reading their sentences, substituting the possessive in place of their names, and calling upon other children to replace them. Using techniques for second-language teaching, Mrs Ortega guided the pupils in practicing oral English and in the recognition of particular words in the sentences which they read.

Since many of the children enter the first grade with limited knowledge and appreciation of themselves or their environment, social studies materials are being developed to deal with this problem. Some teachers report, for example, that some children do not even know their surnames. Again, both subject-matter and

language are combined into a meaningful programme that develops the self, the concepts, and the oral communication system.

A child looks into a mirror as the teacher uses second-language teaching techniques to elicit response to the question 'Who are you?' The children are not asked 'What is your name?' but 'Who are you?' There is an important distinction between the questions. Many persons may have the same name, but each person is a unique and wonderful individual, different from all other persons. This point of individual uniqueness and value is inherent in self-concept teaching. The mirror is used to assist him in becoming acquainted with himself and how he looks—the colour of his hair, his eyes, his clothes. Such activities and drills, it is believed, will help the child to develop a positive self-image.

Since children in the bilingual programme are taught in both Spanish and in English, the schedule for the day must remain flexible. Instruction is in one language in the mornings and in the other language in the afternoons. The same material is usually not covered in both languages on the same day. This gives children the opportunity to learn a new language while learning subject-matter and provides a review capability for material previously presented. While emphasis in a science class taught in Spanish may be on subject-matter and on reading and speaking Spanish, emphasis in a science class taught in English is on subject-matter and on reading and speaking English.

Additional practice in both subject-matter and language is provided through rhyme and song. Teachers and staff of the San Antonio Bilingual Demonstration and Dissemination Centre have written a series of rhymes, songs, and games, incorporating both subject-matter and language which the children enjoy.

Teachers are involved in a continuing professional development programme. Consultants from the San Antonio Bilingual Demonstration and Dissemination Centre, the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, and the University of Texas at Austin assist in matters of teaching strategy. Some video-tape analysis of the teaching-learning situation was used this year as part of the in-service programme. Teachers are frequently provided with the opportunity of sharing ideas and experiences with their colleagues.

The parents are reported to be enthusiastic about the programme. They have been kept informed of activities involving their children through a Spanish television programme. Teachers and children have participated in demonstration lessons on television programmes aired twice a week on the local Spanish-language television station, KWEX Channel 41, which donates the time to the Centre.

The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory is currently testing techniques and materials used in the San Antonio Bilingual Demonstration and Dissemination Centre in their other school systems. A school for migrant children in McAllen, Texas, is involved in the testing, as well as four schools in New York City which have a high concentration of Spanish-speaking children of Puerto Rican ancestry.

One school in the Bronx and three in Harlem pilot-tested the programme with 930 Puerto Rican, Negro, and Anglo children. Following mid-year informal evaluations in New York City, observers reported greater participation in class discussion and more responsive interactions than in non-project classes comprised of similar student populations. Following spring evaluation of the programme, progress was reported in improved language-patterns and in pupil interest among children speaking non-standard dialects.

How successful is the programme? It has been pointed out that children in these classes are learning subject-matter concepts as well as oral English speech-patterns which they are using both in class and out of class. Certainly Sarita, Alberto, Mario, and their classmates are on their way toward becoming truly bilingual.

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Theses and Dissertations

WE HAVE RECEIVED the following list of dissertations, submitted in partial fulfilment of the M.A. in Linguistics, from the Department of English, University of Lancaster.

John E. M. Barnes	A basic television course in articulatory phonetics.
Anne Blakey	Aspects of cohesion in American English—connective functions of the colon and semi-colon.
George N. Cave	The spoken language of a sample of primary-school children from the coastland of Guyana, South America.
Bikram K. Das	Studies in modern English negation.
Josef Fronek	Linguistic aspects of the translation of literary texts from Czech into English.
Muhammad Awwal Ibrahim	A grammatical and semantic study of *about* and *around*
James M. Kirkwood	Proposed syllabus of an English language course for Russian postgraduate students and teachers.
Robert Veltman	Towards a linguistic determination of abstract nouns in English.
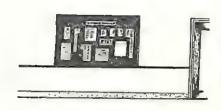
Newsboard

1. The **International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL)** will hold its Fifth Annual Conference from the morning of Monday 3 January 1972 to the afternoon of Thursday 6 January 1972, at the Overseas Students Centre of the British Council, 11 Portland Place, London, W.1. The general theme of the conference will be 'The Use and Abuse of Teaching Aids'. Additionally, there will be a special topic: 'English for Vocational Purposes'.

Particulars of the Association are obtainable from IATEFL, 16 Alexandra Gardens, Hounslow, Middlesex, England. Please enclose international postal reply coupons if you live abroad and need a reply by air-mail.

2. The first **international symposium on functional sentence perspective**[1] was held at Mariánské Lázně, Czechoslovakia, from 12 to 14 October 1970. Linguists from ten European countries discussed certain aspects of the communicative function of the sentence, together with questions of textual cohesion. It

[1] Referred to also as *aktuální členění vetné, aktualnoje členěnije predloženija, aktuelle Satzgliederung, funktionale Satzperspektive, Mitteilungsperspektive, kontextové členění věty, contextual segmentation of the sentence, významová výstavba výpovědi, the thematic organisation of the utterance, smyslovoje členěnije predloženija, Thema-Rhema Gliederung,* and *topic-comment structure.*

was agreed that these questions have not always been given due consideration in contemporary linguistics, in spite of the fact that the phenomena in question, referred to as, e.g. *point de départ* and *but du discours, psychological subject* and *psychological predicate, theme* and *propos, theme* and *rheme, topic* and *comment,* have been the concern of scholars at least since the first half of the nineteenth century. Any linguistic theory with a claim to adequacy should account for FSP phenomena in a consistent way within its framework.

While admitting that there were different possible approaches to the problems under discussion it was conceded that a more unified and coordinated approach can only be achieved by a pooling of interests and reappraisal of individual approaches in the light of the insights gained into other approaches during discussion. This aim would certainly be promoted by an extensive bibliography, and a glossary of the most frequent terms used by the FSP theorists.

Further investigation into FSP, duly employing also the methods of contrastive analysis, should be concerned with an explicit formulation of FSP phenomena within a theory of grammar aiming at completeness, as well as with the relevance of FSP to various fields of applied linguistics (language teaching, stylistics, practical and theoretical problems of translation, automatic processing of linguistic data).

(Dr F. Danes, Chairman, Organising Committee).

Readers' Letters

1. Professor Gerhard Dietrich writes from Halle (Saale), Germany: Taking as I do a special interest in 'Question Box', I hope I may be allowed to take up and enlarge upon one or two points raised there in the issue for October 1970 (XXV, 1).

Re Question No. 14: The so-called verb-particle combinations are of two kinds: they may be either (a) transitive verb-adverb combinations or (b) intransitive verb-preposition combinations. Therefore the introductory sentence of the query does not make good sense. If 'particle' is understood as 'adverb', then the latter always *follows* a personal pronoun object, so that 'precede' at the end of the sentence before the full stop would have to be regarded as a slip of the pen or a printer's error; e.g.: Although *He turned on the lights* and *He turned the lights on* are both equally acceptable, we can only say *He turned them on*. If however, 'particle' is taken in the sense of 'preposition', then naturally the latter (as its name says) *invariably* precedes its noun or pronoun, e.g. *The dog turned on the boy* or *The dog turned on him*.

On and *across* are among the numerous particles that occur as adverbs in some combinations and as prepositions in others. In such sentences as *He put his message across admirably* and *He managed to put it across* the position of *across* after the noun or pronoun conclusively proves the particle to be an adverb, also in *He put across his astonishing message admirably*. *Message* and *it* are direct objects here, and the verb-adverb combination is transitive. On the other hand, the unacceptability of sen-

tences like ×*I came the picture* (or *a person*) *across* and ×*I came it* (or *him*) *across* shows clearly that in *I came across the picture* (or *a person*) and *I came across it* (or *him*) the particle cannot be an adverb but must be a preposition (as correctly stated by S.P. in his answer). Consequently, 'across the picture *or* a person' and 'across it *or* him' are *indirect* objects and the construction is to be considered an *intransitive* one, despite the fact that it is synonymous with 'find or meet unexpectedly'. A more elaborate treatment of the subject, copiously illustrated by contrastive examples, is to be found in my book 'Adverb oder Präposition? Zu einem klärungsbedürftigen Kapitel der englischen Grammatik', Niemeyer, Halle (Saale), 1960.

Re Question 15: It is quite right to say that the present perfect tense is used to report a past action, or series of actions, from the standpoint of the present; however, what exactly does this mean? Somehow, the preceding wording, i.e. 'the period of time ... began in the past and continues into the present', seems slightly out of keeping with that statement. In contradistinction to the past tense (or preterite), which is a prospective tense (direction: past time → present time), the speaker's mind and point of view having moved back into past time, the present perfect tense (more appropriately called 'the pre-present tense' by R. A. Close) is a *retrospective* present tense (reverse direction: past time ← present time). Starting in his mind from a situation, a fact, or a result in the present, the speaker or writer looks upon the

period of time extending from the present moment back into the past. Now that is exactly what the journalist was doing when he wrote his sentence (*Britain has won the world amateur ice-dancing championship for the last four years);* so the past tense was (or rather should have been) out of the question, no gap in time or break, as is the case with the preterite, making itself felt in such a retrospect. The problems involved here have been fully dealt with in my book 'Erweiterte Form, Präteritum und Perfektum im Englischen' (Hueber, München, 1955) and, more concisely, in an article, 'Ein Schmerzenskind der englischen Grammatik: Der Gebrauch des Präterits und des Perfekts im Englischen', in the journal 'Praxis des neusprachlichen Unterrichts' (Lensing, Dortmund) 1969, No. 4.

2. D. J. Priestley writes from Kent, England: In *ELT* XXV, 1, S.P. replies to a query about the incidence of *different than* in all varieties of English, and makes the point that this usage is unlikely to supplant *different from* in such patterns as *Pines are different from oaks.* Arising out of this, the extent to which *different to* is beginning to be acceptable usage in spoken and, at least in the mass-information context, written English is perhaps worth observing. It seems correct to say that this development is taking place in the American and British speech-groups simultaneously, since I have heard the form in the speech of members of both groups in about equal proportions, since beginning to listen specifically for it a couple of years ago over a period when I have been in association with North American and British speakers.

One imagines that, in attacking the usage, adherents of the purist and prescriptivist doctrines would point out that it testifies to the user's lack of (classical?) education, or insensitivity to the 'force' of the *dis-* element in *different,* reinforcing their argument by reference to the Latin case which regularly signals comparison or differentiation, namely the ablative—the 'from' case. A parallel might be evinced by citing *averse to,* which seems to be universally accepted now (it has an impeccable history in English literature too), though *averse from* has also enjoyed currency; condemners of *different to* would thus find some moral armament in the decline of *averse from* and plead with the language-user in the street not to inflict the same fate on *different from* (choosing to ignore, in advocating this alertness to the possible disappearance of *different from,* that *aversus* in Latin is followed by the dative case!).

As far as foreign speakers of English are concerned, I find it difficult to decide whether the use of *different to* by a speaker whose control of English structure is in general good should be corrected, if a native-speaking *hearer* does not feel that what he hears in this instance calls attention to the foreign speaker's imperfect knowledge and thus emphasises his foreignness. Clearly, one would hesitate to recommend that the form should actually be *taught* to foreign learners, since according to Mittins—in *Attitudes to English Usage* (OUP)—*different to* commands an acceptability rating of only 30 per cent in a sample of 500 native speakers (in contrast, *averse to* was given a 81 per cent rating), and certainly I think I have some slight resistance to accepting it *in print,* and this is a more instinctive reaction than anything else. Modern-language theories do not seem very keen on giving much credit to instinct where language behaviour is being investigated, but in this sort of case I am sure it has some part to play.

The confusion which may be observed in connection with *compared to/with* suggests that one man's instinct is another's prejudice,

and that the *different from/to* opposition (if it is an opposition) depends ultimately on the (native) language user himself. Again instinctively, I feel that it is unlikely that such forms as *differ to* or *differentiate to* will reach a level of acceptability in speech that will allow them into writing, if indeed they appear in speech at all! Yet one cannot reject the possibility that they may occur, since *in comparison with* apparently enjoys equal favour with *in comparison to*, where the power of analogy has not been moderated by any objection that a form cannot be developed analogically because it does not 'feel' right.

Question Box

1. What is the difference between the director and the producer of a play or film?

ANSWER. Their functions overlap to some extent and their duties often vary from cinema to cinema and from theatre to theatre both in Britain and in America. In general, however, the main difference is easy to define. The *director* (also called *managing director* or plain *manager*) looks after the whole building, furniture, seating, lighting, heating, ventilation, and safety precautions. He decides on seasonal programmes, advertising, and price of tickets. The *producer* is concerned with the public presentation of one particular film or play, including the hiring of artists, the allocation of parts, and the personal conduct of rehearsals. He takes care of every detail in the actual production of a film or play. The producer is therefore largely responsible for its success or failure.   [S.P.]

2. The epithet *naturalistic* is applied both to novels, such as those by Theodore Dreiser, and to certain kinds of drama. Am I right in thinking that in the first context the term has a more philosophical sense, whereas in the second it refers to the setting or scenery?

ANSWER. Yes, this is true. Dreiser's *An American Tragedy* (1925) gave a frank description of United States society exactly as he saw it. He wrote with passionate sincerity and he tried hard not to be romantic.

It is important to bear in mind that the noun *naturalism* and its adjective *naturalistic* are in the first place philosophical terms. Naturalism is that view of the world which ignores the supernatural and which denies that there can be any such thing as spiritual revelation.

Applied to drama, however, it is, as you say, often used of the setting or scenery, and it means natural, realistic, true to life, without adornment. It is then used in a somewhat looser sense.

Many words have stricter and looser senses, both of which are recorded in a good dictionary. A careful writer shows clearly in which sense he is using a word, so that the reader is left in no doubt about its meaning in that particular context.   [S.P.]

3. In Graham Greene's *The Power and the Glory* we read (on page 200) that 'an odd grove of crosses stood up blackly against the sky, leaning at different angles!' Why not 'stood up black'? Is there really any such

word as blackly? I cannot find it in my dictionary.

ANSWER. Green might well have said 'A grove of crosses stood up black against the sky', using a predicative adjective instead of an adverb of manner, but the meaning would not have been quite the same. The emphasis would then have been laid more strongly on colour, contrasting the blackness of the crosses with the whiteness of the sky as their background. When he wrote 'blackly' the author meant 'darkly, in a gloomy and threatening manner'.

You have not found *blackly* in your dictionary for the simple reason that -*ly* is a living prefix which can be attached to any adjective (except to those already ending in -*ly* like *friendly* and *holy*). Adverbs in -*ly* do not appear in concise dictionaries unless there is some question of spelling (as in *truly*) or of meaning (as in *hardly*).

Nevertheless, you will find *blackly* duly recorded in the large American dictionaries like the Third Webster of 1961 and the Random House Dictionary of 1966. You will find it also in the twelve-volume Oxford English Dictionary where one of the illustrative quotations—'The pool blackly shivering'—is taken from George Eliot's last novel *Daniel Deronda* (1876).   [S.P.]

4. What are the functions of the Board of Governors and of the Board of Management of the BBC? And what is the Director of Administration in charge of?

ANSWER. The Board of Governors of the British Broadcasting Corporation is the *legislative* body appointed by the Queen to advise the Director-General on policy. This supreme governing body has twelve members: a chairman, a vice-chairman, national governors for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, and seven other governors. These twelve persons are selected by the Queen from people prominent in public life, and they are unpaid.

The Board of Management is the *executive* body appointed to assist the Director-General in the day-to-day work of organising radio and television programmes. Its members are full-time heads of departments.

The Director of Administration is one of these heads and he acts as a link between all the other departments, which include finance, staff training, appointments, grading, medical care, welfare, sport, programme contracts, copyright, and catering.

You will find full information on these and other topics in the current issue of the *BBC Handbook*, which you can order through any bookseller or obtain direct from BBC Publications, 35 Marylebone High Street, London WIM 4AA.   [S.P.]

5. I have just read in my newspaper: 'A cliffhanger is anticipated'. What on earth does this mean?

ANSWER. The writer means to say that 'a period of acute suspense is expected', and he uses the journalistic term *cliffhanger* in order to make what he is saying more vivid and dramatic (or melodramatic). Imagine a man hanging for dear life from the edge of a high cliff. Has he strength enough to hold on until help comes?

Notice that such an unfortunate person should be strictly described as a *cliff-hanger-from*—he does not hang the cliff, but he hangs from it. The compound noun *cliff-hang-er* is therefore said to be 'an irregular formation'. *Coathanger*, on the other hand, is regular. It may be described as a shoulder-shaped frame, with a hook at the top, made of wire, wood or plastic, on which one hangs a coat when not in use.

Notice further that in the sentence you quote *cliffhanger* has shifted its meaning. It refers no longer to a person but to a thing or state of affairs. This kind of semantic change is fairly frequent in compounds. A compound word often acquires a secondary meaning which then becomes fixed by context and usage. Today *cliffhanger* is a vogue word. But who knows? Tomorrow it may

go out of fashion and be heard no more.   [S.P.]

6. How would you parse *better* in the expression 'You better go'?

ANSWER. I should certainly parse it in the ordinary way as a comparative adverb though I know that some functional grammarians insist on taking it as a new kind of auxiliary verb. You do indeed find *better* used in this way by well-known American and Irish novelists such as Sinclair-Lewis and Joyce Cary. 'We better get outa (= out of) here quick.' *Elmer Gantry* (1927). 'You better look out, Mr Gimson.' *The Horse's Mouth* (1944). But 'You better' is clearly an ellipsis of 'You'd better' in which 'you'd' is a reduced form of 'you had'. 'You better go' means 'It is (would be) better for you to go': 'It is better for you to go than John or Mary': 'It is better for you to go than to stay at home'.

This expression 'You better go' is very colloquial, if not substandard. It should therefore not be taught to pupils who wish to speak and write good plain English.   [S.P.]

7. What is the difference between *all* and *everything*? Why do people say 'Is that everything?' meaning 'Is there anything else?' but 'Is that all?' meaning 'Have you nothing more?' Recently I heard a teacher correct a pupil who said gratefully, after a long explanation, 'I understood all', telling him that he should have said 'I understood everything'.

ANSWER. These are very interesting questions indeed and they are best answered by beginning with the simple adjectives *all* and *every*. Both mean 'the whole lot', but whereas *all* refers to the whole number or amount as one mass or group, *every* denotes each thing or unit taken separately. *All* is used both attributively and predicatively with both singular and plural nouns: *every* is used only attributively with singular nouns. *All* functions as adjective, noun and adverb: *every* functions as adjective only. Compare

all men	every man
all day	every part of the day
all or nothing	everything or nothing

The equivalent of *all* (noun) is *everything*. When, for instance, Prince Hamlet said of his dead father—

He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again

                    Hamlet I ii 187

—he meant to say that his father was not a saint, but, if one takes everything into account, he was the very best type of human being.

In Chapter Five of *Thrift* (1875) the Scottish reformer Samuel Smiles wrote words that have since become proverbial: 'A place for everything, and everything in its place'. He might have written: 'A place for all, and all things in their proper places.'

Let us now return to your questions. When people say 'Is that everything?' they have single objects or units in mind. 'Is that the last one? Are there no more to come? Is there anything else?'

When they say 'Is that all?' they have one quantity or group of things in mind. 'Have you left any part behind? Have you anything else to declare (at the customs)? Have you nothing more?'

That teacher was, I think, somewhat hasty in reprimanding a pupil for saying 'I understood all'. The remark was correct grammatically, though perhaps a little too archaic and literary in that context. Perhaps the teacher had been trying hard to explain not one thing at length, but several smaller things. And that reminds me. Only last week I heard a well-known broadcaster say on a radio programme: 'To understand all is to forgive all'. He was, it is true, echoing those famous words of Madame de Stael in her novel *Corinne*: 'Tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner'.   [S.P.]
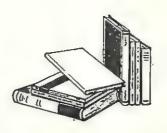
Reviews

TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE. By Mary Finocchiaro. *Harper & Row.* Revised and Enlarged, 1969. xvi + 478 pp. $7.95. £3.70

The title of this book by Dr Finocchiaro makes it clear that it is chiefly concerned with the teaching of the English language to those citizens of the United States who belong to communities where English is not the mother tongue. But the author casts her net wide; she assumes, quite rightly, that much of what she has to say about teaching English as a second language will be of value to those engaged in the teaching of a second dialect to native speakers of English no less than to those who teach English as a foreign language at home and abroad.

It is not surprising that with her experience the author places great emphasis on the relation between the school and the community from which its pupils are drawn, the social customs and taboos of the latter, the vocational opportunities which it offers and the leisure activities which it provides. She favours a teaching programme which would begin by stressing the skills of speaking and of listening/understanding and end by devoting the greater part of the time available to the skills of reading and writing. Many teachers of English as a foreign language may wish to interpret these directives somewhat liberally and there is no doubt that, earnest advocate as she is of pupil-centred education, Dr Finocchiaro would readily agree that these recommendations should be revised with reference to the function, and currency, of spoken and written English within the environment of the foreign learner.

So much for what the author refers to as planning and which seems to embrace what we would call curriculum studies. What Dr Finocchiaro calls lesson formats may be assumed to correspond rather more closely to what is known in the United Kingdom as lesson planning. Statements of aim and summaries are an integral part of the examples of lesson formats given. One teacher at least questions the usefulness of offering an explicit statement of aim to younger learners, who may not share the desire of older beginners to know what it is all leading up to. 'There should be little or no digression from the stated aim throughout the lesson.' At first sight this remark may seem to highlight a basic difference in approach between US- and UK-trained teachers. However, we ought to interpret this in terms of the carefully controlled programme which the author describes, in which the teacher does not expect his pupils to know anything which he has not taught them, where he is not called upon to rectify the sins of omission committed by his predecessors, and where it is taken for granted that the special needs of individual pupils will be catered for. Given these (ideal?) conditions, it is quite feasible to demand that the teacher hold fast to his purpose and press on to his declared goal. This is not to say that he may not have to alter his approach drastically in response to the feedback he receives in the course of a lesson.

He is not committed to any one approach, only to an aim. And of course this is where the summary comes in. The author suggests that the question 'What have we learned today?' is basically still a good one and may in all fairness be put to a class of pupils with some competency in the language.

Other topics which the author covers involve the dispositions and utilisation of what we might call inspectors, the attitudes of teaching staff to the problems presented by the presence of pupils with other mother tongues in the school, and relations with pupils' parents. The advice given is, of course, relevant to the situation in English schools with a large immigrant population, where too often the majority of members of staff prefer to leave the question of the immigrants to the teacher nominally in charge of the reception or withdrawal classes. There are still too few teachers who would take kindly to Dr Finocchiaro's suggestion that '*every* teacher in the English-speaking school with students whose mother tongue is not English should be first a teacher of English and then of a curriculum area'.

This book has less to say about the use of visual aids in language teaching than one would have wished, though a number of simple devices for pronunciation teaching and other purposes are referred to. However, the teacher is explicitly encouraged, even expected, to produce his own materials, and it is suggested that teachers might co-operate with each other in the production of these. This is not a new idea, of course, but it is reassuring to see it repeated at a time when a number of commercial organisations are cashing in on pedagogical inertia and producing and promoting a variety of products for which they claim a great deal but which are not designed with any one type of learner in mind.

What is true of visual material is also true of textual matter.

Teachers of English as a foreign language and teacher trainers are all too familiar with the complaints that either there is no commercially produced textual material suited to the age and interests of these pupils or those, or that those books that exist are expensive, unobtainable, or both. It is not necessary for all language material to be constantly edifying and there is plenty of written English available if one is prepared to go to the trouble of copying and duplicating it.

Finally, there are six pages on language games. One would have wished for more, but the book is substantial enough in both senses of the word. Throughout it the personality of the author is manifest, her discourse is lively, authoritative, and yet never doctrinaire. It must be clear to those who do not know her that she is a very good teacher.

PARAGRAPH WRITING. By Frank Chaplen. *O.U.P.* 1970. iii + 74 pp. 30p (Teacher's edition, iii + 90 pp. 45p).

Yet another textbook in which attempts to organise English usage tidily lead the writer into what one might call 'the mechanistic fallacy'— the formulation of rules to deal with particular mistakes made by particular learners. All teachers of English are tempted to categorise and name language customs, and one sympathises with the attempt to control intractable material. They do it because of the gaps in many descriptive grammars; but the gaps exist because the material is intractable and the grammars' approach assumes it is not. So teachers build up the folklore of English usage to fill the gaps. Students spend much time learning what they take to be unbreakable rules, only to be mortified and nonplussed when they meet the inevitable instances where these 'nonce' rules do not apply. Worse still, they are thus provided with curious and irrelevant grounds of criticism when they come to

reading English, and a further barrier to understanding.

This book is a fair example of the kind. What is said about the paragraph is clear; the examples and exercises are varied and reasonable. The mechanistic approach is seen with the arbitrary definition of the components of a paragraph—'topic sentence', 'major support sentence', 'minor support sentence'. These may provide crutches for the inexperienced writer, but will lead to the wrong kind of criticism and deflection of attention when the learners are reading English books. The analogy of branches of a tree for 'support' sentences is not a happy one: the branches so clearly do not support the trunk, though they add to the totality of the tree.

When grammar and usage are the theme, the 'rules' are sometimes misleading. An attempt is made to sort out the complicated matter of articles. On page 32 we are told:

'*work* is one of several nouns that are not preceded by an article when they are used to describe the activity associated with the same noun used as a countable noun.' This is indeed to darken counsel. Few grammarians would support the concept of a noun describing an activity—and few foreign learners could unravel this sentence. The examples do not all hold water: 'Lunch costs 75p there' is just as acceptable—and as common—as 'A lunch costs 75p there'. 'He is going to bed' is labelled 'activity'; but what about 'He is going to the cinema'? We are not told the 'several nouns' to which this 'rule' applies. 'He met her on his way to a class' is as correct structurally as the example; there is possibly a slight difference here between English and American usage. 'TV', in yet another example, is not fairly contrasted with 'two television sets'.

A painstakingly constructed book, with the defects of its qualities.

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